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**ROLE OF MILITARY IN POST-CONFLICT
RECONSTRUCTION IN SRI LANKA**

by

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March 2012

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ROLE OF MILITARY IN POST-CONFLICT SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka has suffered a violent conflict between the government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for nearly three decades. By the time LTTE was crushed in 2009, over 80,000 had been killed, 11,656 Tamil Tigers were either arrested or surrendered, and 294,000 people had been internally displaced during the final phase of the conflict. Furthermore, almost all the infrastructure in formerly terrorist-held areas was damaged or destroyed. The GoSL recognized its obligation to provide humanitarian relief; essential services, rehabilitation, and development support to people in LTTE-controlled areas and began post-conflict reconstruction. The GoSL decision to house internally displaced persons (IDPs) prevented much-needed, international-community support during the initial stage of reconstruction. The drain of GoSL resources due to the prolonged conflict and reconstruction in the Eastern Province forced GoSL to use the military to fill gaps in the post-conflict reconstruction process. By doing so, the GOSL was able to resettle 97% of the total IDPs, providing them infrastructure facilities and livelihood opportunities, while reintegrating more than 90% of ex-combatants after their rehabilitation by the end of 2011. This study will examine the way in which the military used its capabilities to shape the reconstruction process.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
ARTRAC-		Army Training Command
B.C.E	-	Before the Christian Era
BCGR	-	Bureau of Commissioner General of Rehabilitation
CAO	-	Civil Affairs Officers
CBS	-	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
CCHA	-	Consultative Committee of Human Assistance
CEGS	-	Commissioner General of Essential Services
DDR	-	Demobilization and Reintegration
DS	-	Divisional Secretariat
EU	-	European Union
FFA	-	Food for Assert
FFT	-	Food for Training
FFW	-	Food for Work
GA	-	Government Agent
GoSL	-	Government of Sri Lanka
ICRC	-	International Committee of Red Cross
IDPs	-	Internally Displaced People
IEDs	-	Improvised Explosive Devices
INGOs-		International Non-Government Organizations
IOM	-	International Organization of Migration

IPKF	-	Indian Peacekeeping Force
IT	-	Information Technology
JPA	-	Joint Plan of Assistance
JVP	-	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
LLRC	-	Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission
LTTE	-	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NGOs	-	Non Government Organizations
OCDC	-	Officers Career Development Center
PTF	-	Presidential Task Force
POWs	-	Prisoners of War
Rs	-	Sri Lankan Rupees
UPFA	-	United Peoples Freedom Alliance
UN	-	United Nations
UNHCR-		United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF-		United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WASH-		Water and Sanitation Cluster
WFP	-	World Food Program
WHO	-	World Health Organization

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka, a pear-shaped island nation in the Indian Ocean, was called Serandib in ancient history and later Ceylon during the colonial era. Located about eighteen miles off the southeastern coast of the Indian subcontinent, the island occupies a strategic location in the Indian Ocean astride important trade routes. For this reason, Ceylon was occupied by successive waves of invaders from India, Portugal, Holland, and, from 1802, England.¹ The population is divided between Sinhalese, whose primary religion is Buddhism, and Tamils, a Hindu population that migrated from southern India at least two millennia ago. The Tamil numbers were reinforced by the British, who imported Tamils from southern India to work on tea plantations in the central part of the island. British policy favored the Tamils with government jobs, so when Ceylon was granted independence in 1948, tensions between the two groups gradually increased.² Civil war broke out in 1983 when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched an insurgency, which an Indian invasion and at least four internationally and locally brokered ceasefires failed to halt.

The LTTE evolved into a ruthless and powerful insurgency with separate sea and air wings, in addition to ground forces organized similar to a conventional army, with heavy artillery and ground-to-air missiles.³ By 2006, the LTTE unofficially controlled two thirds of Sri Lankan territorial waters and one third of Sri Lankan territory.⁴ The Tigers proclaimed an independent Tamil state called Tamil Eelam in the north and east of the island.⁵ By the time the LTTE was crushed in 2009, over 80,000 had been killed, 11,000 Tamil Tigers were captured or surrendered,⁶ and 294,000 people had been made

¹ K.M.De Silva, *History of Sri Lanka* (CA: University of California, 1981) 3–254.

² Ibid., 486.

³ Asoka Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2009) 197.

⁴ Neil Devotta, “The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Lost Quest for Separatism in Sri Lanka,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (November/December 2009) 1023.

⁵ Sumantra Bose, *Contested Lands: Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010) 69-89.

⁶ Ibid.

refugees in the north.⁷ Furthermore, almost all the infrastructure in formerly terrorist-held areas in the north and east was either damaged or destroyed⁸ and most agricultural land was sewn with mines and unexploded ordinance or abandoned, due to damaged irrigation systems.

A. RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHETICAL ARGUMENT

In this thesis, I analyze the roles and missions performed by the Sri Lankan armed forces in the post-conflict process between 2009 and 2011. Specifically, I want to examine the way in which the military used its capabilities to shape reconstruction. The questions to be explored include the following: What military capabilities have been used in the reconstruction process? What role does the military play in that process? Has the military reorganized itself to conduct these reconstruction roles?

The research question described above is relevant for three main reasons. First, there is a great need to define the military's role in the reconstruction process, because Sri Lanka is still facing considerable challenges relating to demobilization and reintegration (DDR). The success of the post-conflict process, which includes DDR, will largely depend on the military. Hence, this study will contribute to our understanding of the military's role in postwar Sri Lanka.

Second, since the defeat of the LTTE in 2009, there has been a demand for military downsizing, restructuring, and reform. Consequently, the army needs to redefine its mission in a diminished threat environment, improve efficiency and effectiveness, and reestablish civilian control during the transitional period.

Finally, the findings of this study should enhance our understanding of how countries transition from war to post-conflict in the absence of an explicit peace agreement. Indeed, most studies available on post-conflict resolution assume that a peace agreement is necessary for a durable peace and reconstruction. However, the Sri Lankan

⁷ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011* (Sri Lanka: Government of Sri Lanka, 2011), 79. http://www.defence.lk/news/pdf/20110829_SRILANKAS_HE.pdf (accessed November 14, 2011).

⁸ Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, *Sri Lanka: Recharging U.S Strategy After the War* (Washington: U.S Government Printing Office, 2009) 5. <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SRI.pdf> (accessed September 12, 2011).

case deviates from the norm in the sense that reconstruction was undertaken in the absence of a formal peace agreement. This provides an opportunity to assess the reconstruction process in the aftermath of victory in a civil war.

Before discussing the working hypotheses, it is worthwhile to further clarify the scope and domain of this study. The study will focus on two types of roles played by the military: conventional and reconstruction. The former refers to missions and roles related to national defense, multinational peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, and national-disaster response. By contrast, the so-called reconstruction roles include de-mining, route construction, irrigation, clearing farmlands, building public infrastructure and housing, and reintegration of former combatants.

With regards to these roles, the study proposes the following three working hypotheses. First, I examine the extent to which the army is capable (or incapable) of performing reconstruction roles. If the military has not been trained or instructed to perform such roles in the past, it might not be capable of performing them at all during the post-conflict process (2009–2011). This hypothesis thus explores the question of whether the army has the capabilities needed to perform reconstruction roles.

The second hypothesis explores the relationship between conventional and non-conventional military roles, examining the extent to which the latter affects the military's ability to carry out the former when it is increasingly engaged in reconstruction. From this perspective, the second hypothesis suggests that reconstruction roles, as currently performed by the army, have undermined conventional military roles. If this hypothesis holds, then reconstruction roles may ultimately erode military reform and restructuring, affecting both effectiveness and efficiency.

Finally, I assess the impact of military reconstruction roles on the state itself. In particular, I hypothesize that the military's engagement in reconstruction ultimately undermines the state's capacity to provide basic services, since it makes the state more dependent on the military while eroding civilian capacities, especially in activities relating to development and infrastructure.

B. BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

The history of Sri Lanka can be traced to the fifth century B.C.E, when Vijaya, the “founding father of Sri Lanka,” arrived from northern India.⁹ Sri Lankan Aryan colonization spread over the country gradually and settlements were established in several parts of the island, which finally turned into a kingdom. No firm evidence exists to pinpoint exactly when the Tamils first came to Sri Lanka,¹⁰ but it is believed that they migrated either as invaders or peaceful immigrants beginning in the second century B.C.E.¹¹ Sri Lanka’s demography has evolved over time due to trade, cultural, religious, political, and military movement.¹² Furthermore, because south-Indian invasions mostly concentrated on the north-central part of the country, the Tamils concentrated in the north and east of the island, while the Sinhalese lived mostly in the south and west. LTTE propaganda claims that Tamils were the original inhabitants of the north and east of Sri Lanka. Rather, the Sinhalese migrated south to escape historic invasions from southern India, while southern Indian invaders ruled the country’s capital time and again. While some contemporary historians see these invasions as forming the basis of an irreconcilable age-old ethnic hostility, the truth is that there were long periods of cultural and commercial exchanges between the two communities.¹³

State fragmentation due to disputes among ruling elites facilitated Portuguese encroachment from the sixteenth century, followed by Dutch encroachment in the seventeenth.¹⁴ But these European occupations clung to the coast and left the interior of the island to the Kandyian kingdom.¹⁵

⁹ De Silva, *History of Sri Lanka*, 3.

¹⁰ Ibid., 12.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² International Crisis Group, *Sri Lanka: Sinhala Nationalism and the Elusive Southern Consensus*, Asia Report N 141, (Colombo/Brussels, International Crisis Group, 2007) 3.
http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/sri_lanka___sinhala_nationalism_and_the_elusive_southern_consensus.ashx (accessed August 21, 2011).

¹³ Helen Yana. Copulos, and Joseph Hanlon, *Civil War, Civil Peace* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006) 69–112.

¹⁴ Russell R. Ross and Andrea Matles Savada, *Area Handbook for Sri Lanka* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1990) 17–24.

¹⁵ De Silva, *History of Sri Lanka*, 113–233.

This kingdom's fatal decision to request English East India Company assistance to fight the Dutch resulted in Ceylon being declared a crown colony of England in 1802.¹⁶

Unlike the Portuguese and Dutch, the British established a capital at Colombo and developed cities such as Kandy, Galle, Jaffna, Matara and Bandarawela, whose economy was built mainly around tea, rubber, coco, and cinnamon plantations established around Ceylon and worked by south-Indian Tamils imported by the British. Indian Tamil immigrants totaled 651,000 by 1931, a fifth of Ceylon's population.¹⁷ Sinhalese nationalist leaders argued that Indian Tamil immigrants were temporary residents "with no commitment to Sri Lanka."¹⁸ Sinhalese have seen Tamil immigrants as limiting employment opportunities for Sinhalese, whose lands were appropriated by colonial rulers.

While speaking the same language as Sri Lankan Tamils, the more recent immigrants from India are considered a group distinct from the ancient community of Sri Lankan Tamils. Though British missionary schools educated both Sinhalese and Tamils, the British exploited Sinhalese and Tamil nationalism through their divide-and-rule policies that allowed Tamils access to government jobs because Tamils excelled in the English language. Due to this marginalization, the Sinhalese rallied around their local leaders and against colonial power in a counter-colonial movement, using Buddhist identities in the late nineteen and early twentieth centuries. However, Tamils also joined the anti-colonial movement.

Following independence in 1948, the situation was reversed, and the nationalist Sinhalese majority began to discriminate against the more recently settled Tamils by depriving them of citizenship in a successful bid to reduce their electoral influence in the central hills.¹⁹ Interestingly, this was supported by a number of Sri Lankan Tamil

¹⁶ Ibid., 239.

¹⁷ International Crisis Group, *Sri Lanka: Sinhala Nationalism and the Elusive Southern Consensus*, 2007, 4.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Rohan Gunaratna, *The Changing face of Terrorism*, (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005) 14–25.

leaders, “undermining their own late claims for minority rights.”²⁰ Sinhala Buddhist nationalism was impelled from 1956, when S.W.R.D Banadaranaikē abandoned the multiracial policies adopted by previous governments. Its main election promise was to establish Sinhala as the only official language in the government of Sri Lanka.²¹ This decision was a major blow to minority Tamils. The Tamil Federal Party, led by C.J.V Chelvanayakam, demanded greater protection of minority rights, including citizenship for south-Indian plantation workers in the central hills and regional autonomy for northern and eastern Tamil-dominated areas. The then prime minister agreed to the “reasonable use of the Tamil language” and “limited devolution of power to regional council.”²² But Sinhalese public opinion opposed these reforms, which led to communal riots in 1956 and 1958.²³

Nevertheless, moderate Tamil politicians tried to find a solution through a peaceful political struggle. However, this was undermined when South Indians, who were canvassing for a “separate Dravidian state” in India, transferred their support to northern and eastern Sri Lanka for a separate Tamil state “after India adapted the draconian anti-secessionist amendment to its constitution in 1963.”²⁴ Elder, mature politicians were against the idea of a separate state, but they looked for devolution of power to the Northern and Eastern provinces and signed another pact in 1965 between Chelvanayakam and Dudley Senenayake (then prime minister) called the “Dudeley–Chelvanayakam pact.”²⁵ This agreement, like the previous one, was never implemented.²⁶

The United Front government that came to power adopted “university standardization,” allowing educationally underprivileged youths in rural areas to enter

²⁰ International Crisis Group, *Sri Lanka: Sinhala Nationalism and the Elusive Southern Consensus*, 2007, 4.

²¹ Ibid., 5.

²² Ibid., 6.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy*, 177.

²⁵ International Crisis Group, *Sri Lanka: Sinhala Nationalism and the Elusive Southern Consensus*, 2007, 6.

²⁶ Ibid.

university while depriving the opportunity to educationally advanced districts.²⁷ Since Jaffna (the main city in the north) was considered one of the educationally advanced districts, Tamils felt that they had been unfairly penalized. Meantime, in 1971, Sri Lanka experienced a violent uprising to overthrow the government by the right-wing Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a “splinter group that emerged out of the communist party (Peking).”²⁸ The government eliminated the JVP insurgency after declaring a state of emergency. In 1972, the Sri Lankan government introduced a new constitution that was opposed by Tamil politicians because it entrenched Sinhala as the official language, while giving Buddhism a prominent place among other religions.

With this background, on May 1976, Tamil politicians met in the northern province of Vaddukkodai²⁹ and managed to pass a majority resolution seeking “restoration and reconstruction of the free, sovereign, secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam based on the rights of self-determination.”³⁰ They protested restricted citizenship and franchise rights for South Indian Tamils, the Sinhala-only language policy, the lack of equal rights for employment and education, state-planned colonization in Tamil areas, allocating Buddhism a favored position and principal place in the constitution, the exclusion of “Sri Lankan Tamils from mainstream Tamil culture in South India,” authorizing and allowing “communal violence against Tamils, terrorizing, torturing, and imprisoning Tamil youth, and imposing an unacceptable constitution on the Tamils.”³¹

Though the terrorists groups were formed before the Vaddukkodai conference, a new wave of terrorist attacks began soon after, which some believed facilitated by elements in India.³² Prominent among supporters of Tamil independence was M.G. Ramachandran, former chief minister of south India and a man the LTTE considered its

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Rajesh Venugopal, “Sectarian Socialism: The Politics of Sri Lanka’s Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP),” *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 44. No. 3 (2010), Cambridge University Press, 567–602.

²⁹ Wijadasa Rajapakse, “The Way Forward to Achieve Long Lasting Ethnic Reconciliation,” *Transcurrents*, August 2011, <http://transcurrents.com/news-views/archives/2727> (accessed August 29, 2011).

³⁰ A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *The Break-up of Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese Tamil Conflict* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 1988) 88–89.

³¹ Palitha Ruwan Wanigasuriya, *The Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: A clash of Civilizations* (master’s thesis, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1997) 8.

³² Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy*, 1.

“godfather.”³³ The LTTE exploited international links through south India to train their cadres.³⁴

The Sri Lankan government started to change its hardline policies by adapting a new constitution in 1978. This constitution provided citizenship to South Indian Tamils while recognizing Tamil as a national language.³⁵ However, Tamil politicians claimed that recognition of Tamil was ineffective since “there was little effort to implement it.”³⁶ Meanwhile, many Tamil terrorist groups emerged, aiming at a common goal of establishing “a separate state of Tamil Eelam in the north and east of Sri Lanka.”³⁷ However, majority Tamils did not support the terrorist movement until the 1983 riots.

The Indian government covertly supported Sri Lankan terrorist organizations from August 1983 for several reasons,³⁸ beginning with New Delhi’s objection to Sri Lanka’s pro-Western policy after 1977, Sri Lanka’s friendly relations with China and Pakistan, and a powerful Voice of America transmitting station in Sri Lanka.³⁹ Sri Lanka’s willingness to offer Trincomalee harbor to the United States also annoyed New Delhi.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the hostile relationship between then Sri Lankan president, J R Jayawardena and the Indian prime minister, Indira Gandhi, aggravated the mistrust.⁴¹ Therefore, “Sri Lankan Tamil insurgents [were] provided sanctuary, finance, training and

³³ Rohan Gunaratna, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The role of India’s Intelligence Agencies*, (Colombo : South Asian Network on Conflict Research, 1993), xiv.

³⁴ Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism, *Jane’s Terrorism and Insurgency Centre*, 14.
<http://jtic.janes.com.libproxy.nps.edu/JDIC/JTIC/nonTaxonomyselection.do?nonTaxnom>. (accessed August 15, 2011)

³⁵ Government of Sri Lanka, “The Parliament of Sri Lanka, 1978 Constitution,”
<http://www.priu.gov.lk/Cons/1978Constitution/1978ConstitutionWithoutAmendments.pdf> (accessed August 10, 2011).

³⁶ Wanigasuriya, *The Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: A clash of Civilizations*, 9.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Rohan Gunaratna, “The Eight Man Team, International and Regional Implications of the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency,” IRRP, 2006, <https://lrrp.wordpress.com/2006/02/03/international-and-regional-implications-of-the-sri-lankan-tamil-insurgency-by-rohan-gunaratne/> (accessed August 10, 2011).

³⁹ Devotta “The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Lost Quest for Separatism in Sri Lanka,” 1028.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

weapons either by the central government or state government of Tamil Nadu.”⁴² Due to Indian assistance, Tamil terrorist strength grew rapidly and “by 1986, the number of Indian trained, armed and financed militants exceeded 20,000,”⁴³ although this number was seriously underestimated by Sri Lankan security authorities.⁴⁴ In 1987, a coordinated campaign by the Sri Lankan government to eradicate terrorism from Sri Lankan soil⁴⁵ was frustrated by New Delhi, which intervened to prevent Jaffna from being captured by Sri Lankan forces.⁴⁶ When Colombo attempted to capture Jaffna nonetheless, India launched a flotilla into Sri Lankan territorial waters and dispatched transport planes, escorted by fighter jets, over the island to drop supplies to the Tamils, while diplomatically and militarily pressuring the Sri Lankan government to abort the military action against Tamil terrorists.⁴⁷ “Indian intervention saved the LTTE from an imminent defeat by the Sri Lankan Military,” *Asia Report* concluded, and allowed Tamil terrorists to escape into Tamil Nadu.⁴⁸

India subsequently sent an Indian peacekeeping force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka to oversee a peace accord brokered by New Delhi. But the intervention failed, largely because India was not seen as a neutral party and because it was attacked by the LTTE following an Indian attempt to disarm them. The Indian peacekeeping force (IPKF) finally departed Sri Lanka in 1990, after suffering 1,550 fatalities and double the number wounded.⁴⁹ After the withdrawal of the IPKF, terrorist groups fought each other for supremacy, a battle from which the LTTE emerged as the sole terrorist organization. The IPKF withdrawal left the LTTE in control of roughly a third of Sri Lanka for the first time in its history.

⁴² Gunarathna, “The Eight Man Team, International and Regional Implications of the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency.”

⁴³ Gunarathna, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The role of India’s Intelligence Agencies*, vii.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴⁵ Sri Lanka Army, *Sri Lanka Army: 50 Years On, 1949–1999* (Singapore: Aitken Spence Printing (Pvt) Ltd, 1999) 397–399.

⁴⁶ Gunarathna, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The role of India’s Intelligence Agencies*, xii.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁴⁸ *Sri Lanka: Sinhala Nationalism and the Elusive Southern Consensus*, Asia Report, 8.

⁴⁹ Gunarathna, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The role of India’s Intelligence Agencies*, vii.

The Sri Lankan government and LTTE were involved in six official negotiations during their 26-year conflict: the Thimpu talks, the Delhi accord, the all-party conference, the Indo-Lanka peace accord, the Sri Lankan government-LTTE peace talks in 1990, and the Sri Lankan government peace talks in 1995.⁵⁰ Under the leadership of president Chandrika Kumaratunge Bandaranayake, the government proposed a devolution of powers to the provinces, which had not been offered before in any peace negotiations. The government offered to implement a federal system, with each regional government given control over land, law and order, education, local government, housing and construction, agriculture, and industrial development. Meanwhile, the central government would retain control over defense, national security, foreign affairs, international economic relations, and the national media. Tamil political parties showed their willingness to accept the proposal. Even though certain Sinhalese political parties expressed discomfort, Colombo was determined to implement the proposal as a solution to the prolonged conflict. However, the LTTE rejected the government proposal and ended the peace talks by exploding a bomb in Colombo, killing over twenty people and injuring many more.⁵¹

A Norwegian-facilitated negotiation in 2002 was a significant landmark in the separatist war. The Norwegian-brokered ceasefire lasted four years, despite the fact that the LTTE committed numerous ceasefire violations, capped by the assassination of the Sri Lankan foreign minister, a world-renowned human-rights activist and scholar. Even so, the relative suspension of hostilities provided opportunity for the government to carry out reconstruction in LTTE-held areas. The downside was that peace negotiations bestowed legitimacy on the LTTE,⁵² which was recognized as the *de facto* authority in a large portion of the country. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were forced to pay taxes to LTTE, even as they carried out reconstruction work in LTTE-controlled areas. The LTTE continued to carry out atrocities and, overestimating its own military capabilities, walked away from negotiations. However, when the LTTE closed the sluice

⁵⁰ Wanigasuriya, *The Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: A clash of Civilizations*, 9.

⁵¹ Ibid., 10.

⁵² Jayadewa Uyangoda, *Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: Changing Dynamics* (Washington: East West center, 2007) 40.

gate of the Mavil Aru reservoir in 2006, Colombo launched an offensive that culminated three years later in an LTTE defeat on 19 May 2009. This set the stage for postwar reconstruction.

C. PROBLEMS OF POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION IN SRI LANKA

The defeat of the LTTE opened a real and tangible prospect for establishment of long-lasting peace. However, there were no peace accords to end hostilities and provide a framework for reconstruction as the Sri Lankan military crushed the LTTE. The sole winner of the conflict was the government, and government had the ability to implement winner's choice in Sri Lanka. However, Colombo was very much aware of the grievances of the Tamils, which had finally lead to an armed struggle, and the suffering of innocent Tamils under the clutches of the LTTE. Therefore, the government showed an eagerness to address the problems that caused the conflict in the first place and to cement the victory over the LTTE.

Sri Lankan post-conflict challenges fall into two main categories: the first includes immediate humanitarian and human-rights issues and long-term and sustainable economic development in affected areas. The second is the search for a political solution to address the long-term grievances of minority Tamils. Even before the war ended, there were expressions of concern over human-rights issues from the international community. David Miliband and Bernard Kouchner, the foreign ministers of Britain and France, respectively, visited Sri Lanka in April 2009 with the intention of drawing the Sri Lankan government's attention "to the human suffering, and to call for the fighting to stop."⁵³ Some argue that this visit was an attempt by "Western powers and international organizations to prevent the final rout of the LTTE and its leader."⁵⁴ The peace intervention did not succeed, due to the government's reluctance to step away from military action when it was on the cusp of victory. Colombo's position was that, for the

⁵³ David Miliband and Bernard Kouchner, "The Silence of Sri Lanka," *The New York Times*, June 20, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/21/option/21iht-edmiliband21.html?> (accessed September 14, 2011).

⁵⁴ The Government of Sri Lanka, "One Year Since President's Re-Election," January 26, 2011. http://www.news.lk/v2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17224%3Aone-year-since-presidents-re-election&Itemid=640 (accessed September 14, 2011).

fighting to stop, the LTTE should unconditionally surrender to government forces. Soon after the defeat of LTTE, the government came under tremendous pressure from the international community, especially from Western countries, due to the human suffering at the last stage of the war and the government's decision to accommodate all internally displaced persons (IDPs) in government-run IDP centers (which were portrayed as concentration camps in propaganda and demonstrations by the Tamil diaspora in Western countries). The United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, visited Sri Lanka four days after the war ended to assess the situation and issued a joint statement with the Sri Lankan government reiterating the "strongest commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights."⁵⁵ Political leaders had to convince the Tamil diaspora and international community that the government of Sri Lanka was working to rebuild a new Sri Lanka, with a multiethnic, multicultural, multi-religious and multilingual policy.

Soon after the defeat of the Tamil Tigers, the government began to restore the Northern and Eastern provinces to normalcy. In the words of Spinoza, peace is not the mere absence of open violent conflict, but an innate predisposition towards benevolence, confidence, and justice. Former Indian prime-minister Jawaharlal Nehru put it thus: peace is not a relationship of nations. It is a condition of mind brought by serenity of soul. Peace is not merely the absence of war. It is also a state of mind. Lasting peace comes only to peaceful people. It was important for the Sri Lankan government to win the peace in a society that had been indoctrinated, ruled, and mobilized by the LTTE. The Sri Lankan government needed to show that it understood the importance of reconciliation by building confidence, trust, and tolerance. Furthermore, the government needed to provide justice through equity and equality to deprived citizens. This led the government to consider rebuilding society through reconstruction, resettlement, reintegration, and reconciliation. However, the government was also concerned about national security and the safety and security of IDPs while achieving a long-lasting peace. All these preventive measures were seen as important to prevent reoccurrence of violence and conflict.

⁵⁵ United Nations, "Joint Statement by UN Secretary- General, Government of Sri Lanka," May 26, 2009, New York, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sg2151.doc.htm> (accessed November 26, 2011).

Locally, the Sri Lankan government faced a number of problems soon after the defeat of terrorism. Some of the problems were accommodating the more than 294,000 IDPs in welfare centers and relief villages; providing basic needs and shelter; identifying the LTTE cadres who had merged with the civilians (which prevented the government from allowing free movement for IDPs until the screening process was over); restoring IDPs's economic income to secure their livelihood upon their return home; rebuilding infrastructure in rebel-held areas, which had deteriorated due to war and decades of neglect: restoring irrigation systems for agriculture (some due to LTTE action by demolished water tanks); repairing destruction and damage to railway and trunk-road connections through rebel-held areas; rewiring the power-supply line from the national grid to rebel-held areas; rebuilding telecommunication facilities; restoring trade; removing large quantities of mines and IEDs, laid to prevent the advance of government forces; clearing arable lands that had not been cultivated for years; rehabilitating and reintegrating surrendered or captured LTTE cadres; and developing the stagnate economies of liberated areas and the country as a whole.

The government has been eager to implement precautionary measures to prevent a resurgence of violence and conflict. In the interests of national security, the government was reluctant to allow international, non-governmental organizations (INGOs) to have access to IDPs until the screening process was complete. This precaution impeded much-needed international support at the beginning of reconstruction. Therefore, the government of Sri Lanka had to rely on national resources for the reconstruction in the initial stage. However, these resources were limited due to economic conditions in the country.

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II. PLANNING FOR POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION— THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

In this chapter, the role played by the GoSL and INGOs in the post-conflict reconstruction process, along with challenges that the GoSL faced, will be examined. This will reveal the reasons for government to use the military for post-conflict reconstruction since 2009. Studying overall post-conflict reconstruction strategies, the mechanism advanced by the government and INGOs to overcome challenges, and the part played by the military in the overall concept will assist me in examining the way in which the military used its capabilities to shape reconstruction.

In this context, this chapter will discuss the role played by the GoSL and INGOs in the post-conflict reconstruction process under the following headings. First, to understand the government mechanism, the GoSL's resettlement and reconstruction mechanism before the end of the conflict will be discussed. Second, the mechanism put forward by the GoSL after the conflict to meet the challenges that arose due to handling of IDPs, resettlement, and reconstruction will be discussed, with special emphasis on humanitarian assistance, assistance in resettlement, and livelihood opportunities. Third, the devastation in Northern Province will be examined to understand the ground realities and how it facilitated military involvement. Fourth, consideration will be given to the mechanism for rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants, in order to determine the role of the military in the process. Fifth, the involvement of INGOs in post-conflict reconstruction will be considered to discover their role in the overall process and how the military was involved in INGO activities. Finally, a conclusion will be formulated from the findings in this chapter. This chapter will argue that a shortage of resources and coordination difficulties within the government compelled the GoSL to use the military for post-conflict reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration.

A. THE GOSL'S RESETTLEMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION MECHANISM BEFORE THE END OF THE CONFLICT

Though there were few evidences in the Sri Lankan history, recent internal displacement in Sri Lanka happened in 1983 because of the Sinhalese and Tamil communal riots that erupted after the commencement of terrorism.⁵⁶ However, once the situation was brought under control, almost all returned to their native places or migrated. Sinhalese living in Northern Province were forced out by the Tamils, who sought to transform the north of Sri Lanka into a Tamil homeland.⁵⁷ In 1990, 75,000 Muslims were forcibly evicted from Northern Province by the LTTE within the short space of forty-eight hours.⁵⁸ Even Tamils in the northern and eastern provinces, especially those deemed insufficiently supportive of the cause of Tamil independence, were forced to flee LTTE violence. Though the initial response of the GoSL was reactive as the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) surged, the GoSL established IDP centers outside Northern and Eastern provinces, providing basic facilities. In 1991, the GoSL established a ministry of rehabilitation and social welfare, which included a resettlement and rehabilitation authority to handle the increasing number of IDPs.⁵⁹ In 1995, as government forces progressively liberated the Jaffna Peninsula and areas to the south from LTTE control,⁶⁰ the GoSL redesignated the task to a new ministry of resettlement, rehabilitation and refugees. While this ministry tried to orchestrate a national framework to deal with IDPs, it was frustrated by bureaucratic infighting and redundancy among the myriad ministries, departments, and authorities that were also involved in the IDP process.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy*, 105-109.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 75-76.

⁵⁸ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, ii.

⁵⁹ Robert Muggah, *Relocation Failures in Sri Lanka: A Short History of Internal Displacement and Resettlement* (New York: Zed Books, 2008) 137.

⁶⁰ Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nations, "Eelam War III," <http://www.army.lk/opdetail.php?id=4> (accessed on December 24, 2011).

⁶¹ Robert, *Relocation Failures in Sri Lanka: A Short History of Internal Displacement and Resettlement*, 153.

Furthermore, following the signing in 2002 of the Norwegian-facilitated ceasefire, in April 2004 the GoSL renamed the “Ministry for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Refugees” into the “Ministry for Relief, Rehabilitation, and Reconciliation,”⁶² just months before a deadly tsunami devastated the coastal areas of Sri Lanka, killing an estimated 40,000 people and displacing many more. Among the ministry’s functions was providing “relief to IDPs, both conflict and tsunami affected, resettlement and relocation of IDPs in the northeast, rehabilitate damaged social and economic infrastructure in the north and east, promote activities leading to ethnic reconciliation, and payment of compensation to conflict-affected persons.”⁶³

After the United People’s Freedom Alliance (UPFA) came to power, winning the presidential election in November 2005 and general election in April 2004, the GoSL strengthened and broadened the functions of the ministries to provide efficient service by reassigning the subjects, functions, departments, and statutory institutions of the ministries. However, the establishment of new ministries for efficient handling of growing demands further aggravated overlapping responsibilities and created coordination difficulties within the GoSL, which had put forth a genuine effort towards solving problems. Unclear responsibilities and coordination difficulties among central-government institutions created unclear responsibilities among provisional government institutions, too. The Asian Development Bank, which finances many projects in Sri Lanka, has highlighted the “unclear division of functions between provisional and central government” as a weakness in Sri Lanka.⁶⁴

Once the LTTE opted out of the 2002 Norwegian-facilitated peace process and closed off land access to the Jaffna Peninsula, the government faced an uphill task of maintaining essential services in the peninsula and terrorist-controlled areas. To overcome this difficulty and maintain essential services, in August, 2006, the government of Sri Lanka “appointed a commissioner-general of essential services (CGES) to maintain

⁶² Sri Lanka Development Forum, “Creating Our Future Building Our Nations,” 2005, 8. http://www.erd.gov.lk/devforum/Treasury/all_papers.pdf (accessed November 27, 2011).

⁶³ Ibid.,

⁶⁴ Asian Development Bank, *Country Partnership Strategy, Sri Lanka 2009-2011*, 11, www.adb.org/documents/CPSs/SRI/2008/CPS-SRI-2009-2011.pdf (accessed December 2, 2011).

all essential services,” such as food and healthcare in the Jaffna Peninsula and terrorist-held areas in Vanni.⁶⁵ Despite the fact that the GoSL had separate institutions to look after those subjects, the appointment of a commissioner-general of essential services demonstrated again the coordination difficulties among government institutions.

After the liberation of Eastern Province in 2007, a reconstruction and resettlement process was carried out under the “Nagenahira Udanaya,” a government plan for reconstruction of the Eastern province. Nagenahira Udanaya offered an opportunity for hands-on experience before commencing reconstruction in the Northern Province.⁶⁶ On the whole, Nagenahira Udanaya successfully completed infrastructure repairs and de-mining and restored water supplies and electricity so that elections could be held under normal conditions.⁶⁷ This resulted in a drain on government resources while the GoSL was involved in high-intensity conflict with the LTTE in Northern Province. Military involvement in Northern Province, hampered the military’s ability to carry out reconstruction in Eastern Province, which was limited to de-mining and construction of a few roads and bridges.

B. HANDLING OF IDPS, RESETTLEMENT, AND RECONSTRUCTION

Even before the defeat of the LTTE, the GoSL recognized an obligation to provide humanitarian relief, essential services, rehabilitation, and development support to people in LTTE-controlled areas.⁶⁸ As the conflict progressed and it became apparent that government forces were on the verge of the total liberation of LTTE-controlled areas, the GoSL recognized that its task would go beyond infrastructure repair and de-mining—it must help to heal the wounds of twenty-six years of conflict through reconstruction and reconciliation. The GoSL emphasized the importance of the reconstruction of Northern Province, a project that had been repeatedly highlighted by government officials,

⁶⁵ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, ii.

⁶⁶ International Monetary fund, Staff Country Reports, 2009.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, 5–21.

including the president, as the “duty and responsibility” of the government.⁶⁹ The northern reconstruction process encompassed both long-term development plans and resettlement and welfare programs for IDPs. Initially, the primary attention of government reconstruction was towards basic humanitarian assistance to IDPs, resettlement, “restoration of law and order, conducting local government, and provincial council elections.”⁷⁰

Because Sri Lanka is a developing country, and due to its involvement in a prolonged conflict, Colombo needed the support of the international community to carry out effective and efficient reconstruction and reconciliation. During the later stages of the conflict, especially from the end of 2008 to mid-April 2009, 65,000 IDPs crossed over to government-controlled areas, where they were housed in public buildings.⁷¹ Anticipating a larger influx of IDPs once the conflict concluded definitively, the GoSL initially discussed its post-conflict strategy at the twenty-fifth meeting of the Consultative Committee of Humanitarian Assistance (CCHA) on November 21, 2008.⁷² In February 2009, the ministry of resettlement and disaster relief services formulated an action plan in immediate response to the urgent need of IDPs.⁷³ Based on the government’s decision to house IDPs in the same district, “welfare villages” were planned to accommodate anticipated IDPs in the Vavuniya and Mannar districts in Northern Province. These villages were “designed to have semi-permanent structures, roads, electricity, learning centers, post offices, cooperative shops, parks, places of worship, banks, IT centers,

⁶⁹ No Author, “Address by President Mahinda Rajapaksa to the Diplomatic Community in Colombo on Current Development in Sri Lanka,” *The Hindu*, May 7, 2009, <http://www.hindu.com/nic/rajapaksa.htm> (accessed October 23, 2011).

⁷⁰ International Monetary Fund, “Sri Lanka: Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding,” July 16, 2009. <http://www.imf.org/external/country/LKA/index.htm?pn=3> (accessed December 12, 2011).

⁷¹ Humanitarian Appeal, Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Sri Lanka 2009, Mid-Year Review 2009, <http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitarianappeal/webpage.asp?Page=1767> (accessed November 22, 2011).

⁷² Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, 29.

⁷³ Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services, *Urgent Relief Programme for People of Vanni*, February 2009.

child- and woman-development centers, etc.”⁷⁴ “Welfare villages” was a government-sponsored idea formulated to provide better facilities to IDPs. This took into consideration the time required for de-mining and the monsoon season, which was expected within months, while providing basic infrastructure—all of which required extensive effort.⁷⁵

International stakeholders refused to fund the welfare villages because they saw them as internment camps.⁷⁶ This prevented much-needed planning assistance from the international community. However, the GoSL was determined to implement its plan, despite financial and resource difficulties. The GoSL identified an area in Vavuniya district to house IDPs: Manik Farm, located southwest of Vavuniya, with access to water. The ministry of resettlement was tasked to prepare necessary temporary accommodations with basic facilities, including education, to accommodate 24,000 families at three relief villages.⁷⁷ Due to a shortage of resources and capacity at the national and provisional level, the GoSL experienced difficulties in the construction of welfare villages. Thus, even as the conflict raged, the Sri Lankan Army was tasked late in 2008 to carry out jungle clearance, road construction, and temporary sheltering of welfare villages.

This advance planning paid off as more than 230,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) crossed over to government-controlled areas during the final month of the conflict, in addition to the 65,000 IDPs who crossed over before May 2009.⁷⁸ The ministries of resettlement and disaster relief services, economic development, child development and women’s affairs, public administration and home affairs, social services, disaster management and human rights, finance and planning, and nation

⁷⁴ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, 30.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 31.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁷⁸ United Nations, “Sri Lanka: Mid-Year Review, 2009, Common Humanitarian Action Plan,” 1, [http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2009_Sri_Lanka_CHAP/\\$FILE/MYR_2009_Sri_Lanka_CHAP_SCREEN.pdf?OpenElement](http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2009_Sri_Lanka_CHAP/$FILE/MYR_2009_Sri_Lanka_CHAP_SCREEN.pdf?OpenElement) (accessed December 2, 2011).

building and state infrastructure development were involved in the reconstruction. This led to an overlapping of governmental responsibilities and coordination difficulties.

A national steering committee was appointed to supervise and coordinate the management of welfare villages.⁷⁹ At the national level, the minister of resettlement disaster-relief services represented a steering committee, which included representatives from the relevant ministries, such as personnel from the ministry of defense, country representatives of UN agencies, and a consortium of humanitarian agencies.⁸⁰ A district committee was appointed initially with representation from the government agent, chief coordinator, IDP affairs, UN agencies, local government departments and agencies, and INGOs and NGOs. Soon afterwards, the GoSL appointed the chief of staff of the army as competent authority for the north, and, upon his retirement, appointed the commander of security-force headquarters, Wanni (commander, north-central area) to coordinate and expedite the process and serve on the district steering committee. This appointment highlighted the difficulties faced by the government in the IDP centers and sought to expedite the resettlement process by coordinating government institutions.

On 14 May 2009, the GoSL appointed a very high-powered presidential task force (PTF) for resettlement, development, and security in Northern Province,⁸¹ consisting of nineteen members, including chief-of-defense staff, the commanders of the army, navy, and air force, the inspector-general of police, the director-general, the department of civil-defense force, the chief of staff of the Sri Lankan army, and the competent authority for Northern Province.⁸² The then-senior presidential advisor and present minister of economic development was appointed chairman of the task force.⁸³ Members of the presidential task force were senior government officials in institutions responsible for reconstruction and resettlement. The inclusion of five top-ranking military

⁷⁹ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, 32.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, iii.

⁸² Hilary Rajakarunanayake, "Sri Lankan President Appoints Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in Northern Province," *Asian Tribune*, Vol. 11, No. 158, July 14, 2009. <http://www.asiantribune.com/node/17527> (accessed December 26, 2011).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

members in the task force was the first indication of the government's intention to use the military in reconstruction. Furthermore, it was an indication that the government planned to carry out post-conflict reconstruction under a centralized approach.

The primary intention of the GoSL in establishing a PTF was to resettle "families in their places of origin, providing better facilities than they enjoyed when they left their villages."⁸⁴ Though the GoSL established the PTF for reconstruction and resettlement in Northern Province, it had separate ministries for the same purpose. To achieve its intention, the PTF was tasked with formulating and implementing a strategic "framework for rapid resettlement and recovery program, to formulate and implement a strategic plan and road map for accelerated demining and improvement of infrastructure facilities and to assess damages and resources requirement." The PTF implemented these assigned tasks by "mobilizing skills and resources of the government construction agencies;" by pooling resources under the central, provisional "government agencies and projects;" and by obtaining additional resources through donors.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the PTF decided to obtain the "active participation of security forces in humanitarian activities."⁸⁶

Irrespective of all this commitment, the GoSL continued to adapt the precautionary measures that were in place before the defeat of the LTTE. This was due to the weapons training that had been given by the LTTE to all inhabitants "between [the ages of] 18 and 45" in LTTE-controlled areas. The GoSL attempted to anticipate any threat from an isolated fraction of LTTE,⁸⁷ and was very cautious in screening IDPs to identify ex-combatants. Due to security issues, and in consideration of the safety of IDPs exposed to the extensive use of mines and IEDs in former LTTE areas, the GoSL directed IDPs to IDP centers, which were prepared with the assistance of the military. Before allowing IDPs to return home, the government initiated an immediate action plan to conduct humanitarian de-mining per the priorities worked out by United Nations agencies

⁸⁴ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, 75.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 76.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Relief web, "Sri Lanka: Menik Farm Welfare Center of the Internally Displaced Persons," February 26, 2009, <http://reliefweb.int/node/299069> (accessed December 1, 2011).

and Tamil civil servants in the affected areas. The GoSL immediately came under international criticism over the “detentions of thousands of persons in camps,”⁸⁸ even though the GoSL provided them with basic needs.⁸⁹ The international community argued that, “overcrowding, limited water and sanitary facilities, lack of healthcare, restrictions on humanitarian access, and lack of coordination among government” institutions are “having grave consequences in the lives and dignity of the IDPs.”⁹⁰ Though the GoSL intention was to carry out resettlement “based on the speed at which the de-mining process takes place,”⁹¹ it had to expedite resettlement due to international pressure. Against this backdrop, the GoSL “put forward a 180-day plan to resettle all the IDPs.”⁹² Acceleration of any project needs immediate capital and additional resources. The GoSL’s decision to accelerate resettlement forced the dedication of additional resources for de-mining, repair, and improvement to damaged infrastructure in former LTTE-held areas. The acceleration of resettlement further motivated the GoSL to look for alternatives, due to shortages of resources within the government.

Post-conflict reconstruction required advanced planning for proper implementation and sustainability. The GoSL’s “Mahinda Chintana: Vision for a New Sri Lanka,” became President Rajapaksa’s election manifesto for the 2005 presidential election as the primary ten-year strategic plan for development of Sri Lanka.⁹³ Though its 2005 edition had been published before the commencement of humanitarian operations, it gave the required guidelines for development activities in Northern Province, even though Northern Province was under the control of the LTTE at that time.

⁸⁸ Nadeeka and Rodney Arambewela, “Post-war opportunities for peace in Sri Lanka : an ongoing challenge?,” *Global change, peace & security*, vol. 22, No. 3, September 22, 2010, 365.

⁸⁹ No Author, “Asia: A Market base Solution; Sri Lanka’s Displaced Tamils,” *The Economist*, Vol. 394, No. 8663, January 2, 2010.

⁹⁰ No Author, “Sri Lanka: Question of Rights,” *Forced Migration Review* 33 (September, 2009) 4–5, <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR33/FMR33.pdf> (accessed November 12, 2011).

⁹¹ Government of Sri Lanka, “Mahinda Chintana: Vision for the Future, 2010.” http://www.motr.gov.lk/web/pdf/mahinda_chintana_vision_for_the_future_eng.pdf (accessed September 12, 2011), 63.

⁹² Manoharan, N, “Post-Conflict India Sri Lankan Relations: With Lions, Without Tigers,” *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (July–September, 2010), 338.

⁹³ Asian Development Bank, “Report on the Sri Lanka Development Forum,” (January, 2007) 29-30. www.adb.org/.../Reports/SRI-Development-Forum/IN22-07.pdf (accessed November 15, 2011).

However, the 2010 edition deliberately describes reconstruction in Northern Province under the “Uturu Wasanthaya” program. Though Mahinda Chintana is designed to address entire national issues and intended for future national development projects, it provides detailed descriptions of a variety of tasks that were intended to be carried out in support of post-conflict reconstruction, including reconstruction, resettlement, reintegration, livelihood development through agricultural incentives, support of the fishing industry and animal husbandry, and welfare projects.⁹⁴

Having identified the demanding tasks within the resettlement process, the GoSL set its priorities. The GoSL undertook the most essential tasks, such as the preparation of a master plan, “de-mining, restoration of infrastructure, and reestablishment of delivery mechanisms” in the initial stage.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the GoSL initiated a mechanism to grant Rs 325,000 (\$2,825) on a long-term basis to reconstruct houses destroyed during the conflict; Rs 100,000 (\$870) to renovate houses and for construction of sanitary facilities, and Rs 50,000 (\$435) for construction of temporary shelters and building materials worth Rs 50,000 (\$435).⁹⁶ However, since resettlement started, civil administration and services in the newly liberated areas have not been properly established. Therefore, returning families found it difficult to renovate or repair their damaged houses. Furthermore, the GoSL faced difficulties in coordinating its support mechanisms at the lower levels. Since the GoSL’s intention is to provide better facilities to returnees, it was considering the options available.

The GoSL also identified the importance of providing assistance for income generation after resettlement, and initiated a program to provide agricultural equipment such as water pumps and tractors to families engaged in agrarian activities, as well as “seeds and fertilizer relevant to the crops cultivated by them.”⁹⁷ For the fishing industry, free fishing equipment is to be provided and fish-processing centers to be established at

⁹⁴ Government of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Chinthana, 61–64.

⁹⁵ Government of Sri Lanka, “United Nations and Partners, Joint Plan for Assistance Northern Province 2011,” 5. ochadms.unog.ch/.../h.../2011_SriLanka_JPfANP_SCREEN.pdf?... (accessed December 2, 2011).

⁹⁶ Government of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Chinthana, 63.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Mannar and Jaffna in Northern Province.⁹⁸ To promote animal husbandry, free equipment and chicks will be “provided for the poultry industry” and villages of dairy farmers “established to promote the dairy industry.”⁹⁹ Those who wish to engage in self-employment will be provided with the necessary equipment free of charge.¹⁰⁰ However, to implement these tasks, reestablished provisional government institutions in newly liberated areas have been short of resources.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, the government too, has been short of resources to implement all these activities at once. To ease the difficulties faced by returning families, the central bank of Sri Lanka has encouraged all government and private banks to provide loans to IDPs who are willing and capable of starting small enterprises and to those who seek housing loans, irrespective of their ability to provide security to the bank. The central bank of Sri Lanka has assured all other banks that it will back the loans and pay the fees if banks face any difficulty recovering loans.¹⁰²

With these measures in place, the GoSL managed to resettle all IDPs except seven thousand, providing most with livelihood opportunities. At the same time, the GoSL has identified the importance of a continuing commitment to helping people in Northern Province recover and rebuild their lives, so as to achieve sustainable development and peace. The government, in consultation with United Nations agencies and other international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), formulated a joint plan for assistance (JPA) for Northern Province in 2011 to identify priority activities to help people “recover, rebuild, and return to normal life” and achieve long-term, sustainable development “within the shortest time frame possible.”¹⁰³ Guidelines for JPA have been initiated by the PTF to ensure that

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Government of Sri Lanka, “United Nations and Partners, Joint Plan for Assistance Northern Province 2011,” 14. .

¹⁰² Speech delivered by Ajith Nivas Cabral, Governor General Central Bank at Defence Symposium 2011, Sri Lanka.

¹⁰³ Government of Sri Lanka, “United Nations and Partners, Joint Plan for Assistance Northern Province 2011.”

people get more assistance, consistent with the government plan.¹⁰⁴ For year 2012, GoSL has already allocated ten-billion rupees for northern development.¹⁰⁵

C. DEVASTATION IN NORTHERN PROVINCE

Institutions are the key elements in post-conflict reconstruction. Before its defeat, the LTTE controlled approximately one third of the Sri Lankan land area and two thirds of the coastal area, within a de facto state (the LTTE had their own administration in place). Though provisional government institutions were functional in LTTE-controlled areas, officials were under the grip of the LTTE, and therefore these institutions were functioning at low key. Furthermore, they were hampered as the fighting intensified in its final stages. However, these provisional institutions managed to coordinate the humanitarian aid sent to LTTE-controlled areas with the help of international organizations such as the Red Cross and United Nations.¹⁰⁶ After the defeat of the LTTE in 2009, the GoSL reestablished provisional government institutions in the newly liberated areas with the same officials and bureaucrats who held the post during the conflict. Reestablishment of provisional government in newly liberated areas was delayed for a considerable time due to the extreme devastation to infrastructure and concern over mines in the area. The non-existence of provisional government institutions in newly liberated areas where resettlement and reconstruction were needed forced the GoSL to consider other alternatives.

Northern Province, which was under LTTE control for more than two decades, was one of the most underdeveloped provinces in Sri Lanka. Though the GoSL invested on infrastructure projects in LTTE-controlled areas during the time of the conflict, there was little significant development in Northern Province. Furthermore, “heavy fighting during the last phases of the war essentially destroyed much of the north.”¹⁰⁷ Almost all

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ No Author, “10 billion allocated for development projects in the north,” *Daily Mirror*, February 6, 2012, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/16555-10-billion-allocated-for-development-projects-in-the-north-.html> (accessed February 7, 2012).

¹⁰⁶ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, iii.

¹⁰⁷ Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, “Sri Lanka: Recharging U.S Strategy after the War,” 5.

irrigation systems in Northern Province were destroyed, due to series of defense lines constructed by the LTTE that incorporated irrigation canals. LTTE had used most of the roofing sheets in households for defense construction. Most of the roads were cratered and mined to prevent the advance of the Sri Lankan army. It was estimated that more than 1.5 million mines were placed “in the Northern Province, an area of 3,340 square miles,” by the LTTE and the army.¹⁰⁸ Most of the agricultural lands were not cultivated for a long period, due to damages to the irrigation system or presence of mines. This devastation spurred the use of the military for reconstruction in Northern Province, especially since the military had an advantage over civilian authority in the aftermath of the war, due to their presence on the ground and local knowledge about accessible areas.

D. REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

Though demobilizing former combatants and their reintegration into society is a complicated process, the GoSL has taken positive steps to achieve the desired end state, facing both political and logistical challenges due to the large number of surrendered or captured ex-combatants (officially tallied at 11,696)¹⁰⁹ The start of rehabilitation was delayed two months after the surrender due to logistical problems, challenges associated with legal registration of ex-combatants, separating combatants from IDPs, and appointing a commissioner-general of rehabilitation under the ministry of rehabilitation and prison reforms, tasked with overseeing the effort to rehabilitate and reintegrate former LTTE fighters. The GoSL appointed a senior army officer (a major general) as commissioner-general of rehabilitation. The initial challenges faced by the authorities included a need to gain the trust of ex-combatants who had been brainwashed by LTTE leadership and trained to use cyanide capsules in case of arrest. Many ex-combatants had lived their entire lives with the LTTE.

The rehabilitation program started on October 1, 2009, after the regrouping of all ex-combatants and establishment of twenty-four protective accommodations and

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Lankanewspapers.com, “Rehabilitation a complete Success- Brigadier Sudantha Ranasinghe,” May 12, 2010, <http://www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2010/5/56387.html> (accessed November 22, 2011).

rehabilitation centers in the north and east.¹¹⁰ Ex-combatants were given the choice either to continue with formal education or pursue vocational training.¹¹¹ Child soldiers were separated from other combatants and rehabilitated under the supervision of the UNHCR before being handed over to their parents.¹¹² Two hundred and ninety-three children opted to continue with formal education and enrolled at Hindu College, Colombo. James Elder, a spokesman for UNICEF in Sri Lanka, calls the process a “genuine attempt to help child soldiers learn how to be civilians.”¹¹³ Vocational training in various fields has been conducted mainly with local assistance.¹¹⁴ The government has faced a difficulty in providing direct employment, since it has no intention of enlisting them as security forces, though it has identified a need to provide livelihoods for reintegrated ex-combatants. With the GoSL appeal, Sri Lanka’s private sector has shown a greater commitment by offering ex-combatants suitable employment in enterprises in former war-torn areas and absorbing them into existing industries in the south.¹¹⁵ However, considerable numbers of ex-combatants remained unemployed. Therefore, at the beginning of 2012, GoSL offered ex-combatants opportunities to join the police if they meet educational qualifications.¹¹⁶

Furthermore, the GoSL with the assistance of international community has planned to distribute necessary equipment to ex-combatants who opt for self-employment.¹¹⁷ International Organization of Migration (IOM) studies have revealed that

¹¹⁰ H.A.N Hapuarachchi, S Ranasighe and K.M.U Wijerathna, “IDPs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Combatants,” *Business today*, July 2011, <http://www.businesstoday.lk/article.php?article=3488> (accessed December 2, 2011).

¹¹¹ Lankanewspapers.com, “Rehabilitation a complete Success- Brigadier Sudantha Ranasinghe.”

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ No Author, “Asia: Retraining Tiger Cubs; Child Soldiers in Sri Lanka,” *The Economist*, Vol. 392, No. 8640., 39–40.

¹¹⁴ Lankanewspapers.com, “Rehabilitation a complete Success- Brigadier Sudantha Ranasinghe.”

¹¹⁵ Lankapuwath, National News Agency of Sri Lanka, “Rehabilitated Ex-LTTE Cadres get Employment,” June 22, 2010. <http://lankapuwath.lk/index.php/latest-news/security/7693-rehabilitated-ex-ltte-cadres-get-employment-> (accessed November 22, 2011).

¹¹⁶ Charles Haviland, “Ex-Tamil Tiger Rebels Free to Join Sri Lanka Police,” BBC News Asia, January 30, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16795442> (accessed February 3, 2012).

¹¹⁷ Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, “Livelihood Equipment from USAID to ex-LTTE Combatants.” December, 30, 2011, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20100311_10 (accessed January 2, 2012).

vocational training has not only benefited ex-combatants, it can be beneficial to whole families and villages as well. However, while parents are allowed to visit, the international community has not been given access to ex-combatants. Most of the ex-combatants who have been released are either less involved or conscripted cadres. The government has initiated legal action against nearly a thousand hardcore ex-combatants while releasing the remainder.¹¹⁸ The government of Sri Lanka spent Rs 1.8 billion for the first year of the rehabilitation process, while spending Rs 64.5 million per month presently.¹¹⁹ The government has initiated a program to monitor the progress of reintegrating ex-combatants into society, and the military is heavily involved in this process.¹²⁰ Though the GoSL intended to distribute the equipment required for self-employment, this program has not been properly implemented, due to a shortage of resources. However, none of the reintegrated cadres has yet been involved in mischief or arrested by the police.¹²¹ Meanwhile, the former political arm of the LTTE, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), who won the most seats in formerly LTTE-held areas during first-ever elections held after the defeat of the LTTE, has praised the GoSL for its genuine effort in the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants.¹²²

E. THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The presence of INGOs in Sri Lanka can be traced back to the early stages of the conflict in Sri Lanka. Over 1,350 INGOs, 45 local NGOs, and 11 United Nation agencies are presently working in partnership to reconstruct Northern Province.¹²³ Most of the INGOs had their presence in government-controlled areas, as well as in some LTTE-held

¹¹⁸ Ranil Wijayapala, "Rehabilitation, Resettlement of ex-LTTEers, a Success," *Sunday Observer*, October 9, 2011, <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2011/10/09/fea01.asp> (accessed February 2, 2012).

¹¹⁹ H.A.N Hapuarachchi, "Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Combatants."

¹²⁰ Lankanewspapers.com, "Rehabilitation a complete Success- Brigadier Sudantha Ranasinghe."

¹²¹ Ranil Wijayapala, "Rehabilitation, Resettlement of ex-LTTEers, a Success."

¹²² No Author, "TNA Hails Govt. on Rehab of Combatants," *Daily News*, February 15, 2012, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/16810-tna-hails-govt-on-rehab-of-combatants.html> (accessed February 15, 2012).

¹²³ Palitha Kohona, "Reconciliation, Reconstruction: Sri Lanka Ready for the Challenge," *Sunday Observer*, March 20, 2011, <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2011/03/20/fea01.asp> (accessed November 27, 2011).

areas. Due to prolonged operations under demanding conditions in LTTE areas, queries on several projects undertaken by INGOs in these areas were not answered by the INGO.¹²⁴ The GoSL gradually was able to understand the helplessness of INGOs operating in LTTE-controlled areas. However, INGOs's involvement in certain incidents that threatened the national security and image of the country developed mistrust between the government, INGOs, and NGOs.

INGO involvement in the extreme devastation suffered after the tsunami further strengthened the requirement of streamlining the process.¹²⁵ These conditions finally led the GoSL to implement controlled measures on INGO and NGO operations in Sri Lanka and to ask a number of United Nations and INGOs officials to leave the country, especially during the period of the Norwegian-facilitated ceasefire and during the final phase of operations.¹²⁶ The GoSL strictly insisted that all INGOs and NGOs should register with the NGO secretariat and be linked “to the line ministry” to provide identified projects in line with national policy and priorities.¹²⁷ INGOs then sign a memorandum of understanding with a particular line ministry, including scope, geographical location, and subject matter.¹²⁸

With this background, the co-chairs to the Norwegian-facilitated peace process—Japan, the United States, the European Union and Norway—highlighted the imperative of institutionalizing a consultative committee to the GoSL. With these developments, the GoSL established the consultative committee on humanitarian assistance (CCHA) in September 2006. CCHA facilitated bringing together all relevant state actors; selected donors such as Japan, the United States, the European Union and Norway; and UN agencies, INGOs, and NGOs providing opportunities for group effort and collective decision making in providing humanitarian assistance.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Indika Sri Aravinda, “Over 600 INGOs/NGOs Shut,” *Sunday Leader*, December 4, 2011, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2011/11/06/over-600-ingongos-shut/> (accessed December 5, 2011).

¹²⁷ Palitha, “Reconciliation, Reconstruction: Sri Lanka Ready for the Challenge.”

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement and Security in the Northern Province-2011*, iii.

This has helped stakeholders ensure transparency and accountability in humanitarian and development work carried out in Sri Lanka.

Once the government offensive against the LTTE escalated and government forces started regaining areas under LTTE control, neither the GoSL nor INGOs envisioned that the LTTE would take the entire population hostage, preventing them from crossing over to government-controlled areas.¹³⁰ However, UN agencies such as WFP, WHO, and the ICRC, which were operating in LTTE areas, were instrumental in providing essential services such as food and healthcare, with the assistance of low-key government servants in LTTE-controlled areas. For getting required supplies to civilians and ensuring that the supplies were speedily channeled, the GoSL set up a “special logistic hub” in Vavuniya—the northernmost main city in the government-controlled areas—with the assistance of WFP and the UN.¹³¹ The hub has the capacity to store “5000 metric tons of food and non-food items.”¹³² Meanwhile, once the conflict came to its final stages, the concern of most of the INGOs and NGOs was to provide immediate humanitarian assistance, emergency supplies, and return assistance to IDPs, rather than to concentrate on domains of reconstruction, income generation, and reconciliation. Even the senior program officer of UNHCR warned all humanitarian agencies to provide all the assistance that they could to IDPs in January 2009.¹³³

With this background, the UNHCR estimated that 40,000 IDPs will arrive in Jaffna, “30,000 in Mannar and 50,000 in Vavuniya,” and encouraged humanitarian agencies to use this figure as an initial guideline for planning.¹³⁴ INGOs have come across two main obstacles in planning their operations. First, difficulty in identifying sites in areas other than Vavuniya; and secondly, they have been given only restricted access

¹³⁰ Ibid., 79.

¹³¹ Ibid., v.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Humanitarian Information Center for Sri Lanka, “Final Minutes of Meeting, Emergency Shelter Coordination Meeting on January 23, 2009 at UNHCR Colombo,” <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/srilanka/hpsl/docs/shelter/MM-ESCM-230109-FNL.pdf> (accessed December 11, 2011).

¹³⁴ Ibid.

to the IDP camps in Mannar and Vavuniya.¹³⁵ When the large influx of IDPs started to arrive, INGO and NGO supported the government in their capacity to provide humanitarian assistance, despite their disagreement over housing them in IDP centers.

The GoSL firmly believes that projects that INGOs and NGOs undertake will not have a bearing on the targeted people if those organizations cannot sustain the project in parallel with the service of the GoSL.¹³⁶ Therefore, the GoSL is reluctant to approve projects unless INGOs and NGOs have the capacity and funding to work with the GoSL. The Asian Development Bank argues that “contribution of NGOs to development in Sri Lanka has varied over the past several years” and “some are facing significant capacity issues.”¹³⁷ These conditions, along with funding shortages due to the Sri Lankan elevation from developing country to middle-income-country status soon after the conflict ended, have caused many INGOS to close their operations in Sri Lanka.¹³⁸

In 2009, INGO and NGO activities were centered on welfare villages, due to mine risks and concern over the presence of hidden LTTE-weapons caches, even though there was a requirement to develop infrastructure facilities in newly liberated areas.¹³⁹ Therefore, since the end of hostilities, the United Nations and its agencies, as well as INGOs, and NGOs, have supported the GoSL in meeting the basic requirement of IDPs in “welfare centers.” INGOs and NGOs have supported welfare villages by site planning and preparation, establishment of drainage, provision of food, and maintenance of shelter systems.¹⁴⁰ Since May 2009, United Nations agencies and INGOs and NGOs have focused on shelter provision and non-food item assistance, food for IDPs, maintaining a dependable supply of drinking and raw water to IDPs, “repair and maintenance of WASH-related services,” provision of medical equipment and support to the ministry of health to maintain medical facilities in welfare centers, assistance to the education

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Palitha, “Reconciliation, Reconstruction: Sri Lanka Ready for the Challenge.”

¹³⁷ Asian Development Bank, “Country Partnership Strategy, Sri Lanka 2009–2011,” 11, www.adb.org/documents/CPSS/SRI/2008/CPS-SRI-2009-2011.pdf (accessed December 2, 2011).

¹³⁸ Government of Sri Lanka, “United Nations and Partners, Joint Plan for Assistance Northern Province 2011.”

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

ministry to establish schools within IDP centers, and provision of basic educational materials to children in welfare centers. However, INGOs and NGOs who were involved in de-mining continued their operations in newly liberated areas.

Once the resettlement process picked up, in correlation with the speed of de-mining, the United Nations and other partner organizations provided “assistance aimed at supporting the reestablishment of services and livelihood in support of government efforts.”¹⁴¹ However, all the program and projects have to be approved by the PTF before implementation.¹⁴² This facilitated the INGO contribution to resettlement and development programs in Northern Province’s being generated at the lowest level by the “divisional secretariat with the participation of communities” in identifying basic needs.¹⁴³ With this mechanism in place, INGOs contribution to resettlement and reconstruction was initiated.

INGOs and NGOs are instrumental in filling the gaps in the government resettlement and reconstruction plan. WFP has initiated actions to provide food for returnee families, help IDPs live with host families, and build collaboration with government multipurpose cooperative societies for food distribution.¹⁴⁴ “Each returning family gets Rs 25,000 (\$216) from the U.N. high commissioner for refugees and food rations for six months from the World Food Program.”¹⁴⁵ To support the transition of IDPs to their native places, WFP has initiated food-for-work (FFW), food-for-training (FFT), and food-for-assets (FFA) programs in Northern Province.¹⁴⁶ INGOs, in collaboration with the ministry of agriculture, have provided assistance such as “paddy and other food crops, vegetable seeds, fertilizer, basic agriculture tools, and barbed-wire rolls to support agriculture and animal husbandry.”¹⁴⁷ Assistance has been provided to

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 5.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 5.

¹⁴⁵ Amantha Perera, “U.N. Wants Economic recovery in Former War Zone,” Global Information Network, 2010, <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51810> (accessed December 27, 2011).

¹⁴⁶ Government of Sri Lanka, “United Nations and Partners, Joint Plan for Assistance Northern Province 2011,” 5.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 14.

government-service providers to overcome transport shortages.¹⁴⁸ INGOs have supported livelihood programs such as “agriculture, livestock, employment promotion, micro-enterprises development, skill training, business promotion, marketing and fishery” to support the returning IDPs.¹⁴⁹ INGOs have also initiated projects and programs in the fields of water and sanitation, education, health and nutrition, civil administration, and a national protection mechanism and in-mine action.¹⁵⁰ Though the GoSL intended to monitor the activities of INGOs and NGOs, it has faced difficulties in monitoring their field activities in newly liberated areas, due to a shortage of resources within provisional governmental institutions. Therefore, the GoSL needed an effective mechanism to monitor the field activities of INGOs and NGOs.

F. CONCLUSION

As the conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE drew to a close in 2009, Colombo was forced to confront a complex post-conflict security situation that combined large numbers of IDPs and surrendered or captured cadres with a requirement to rehabilitate the extremely devastated Northern Province. The efforts to realize this mission was complicated by several factors, beginning with the need to deal with a growing refugee crisis (which was complicated by the fact that former fighters were mixed in with civilian refugees). Disagreements over how to balance the government’s security concerns with the need to process and resettle hundreds of thousands of IDPs strained relations between the international donor community and the GoSL, which had complicated, and sometimes slowed, reconstruction and reintegration efforts. Resources that had already been depleted by the reconstruction of Eastern Province before the liberation of Northern Province were further taxed by a proliferation of central and provincial government bureaucracies, agencies, and commissions with confused and overlapping responsibilities that made coordination difficult. Finally, the extreme

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

devastation of Northern Province and the presence of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have made it dangerous for people to return to their homes.

After identifying all these challenges, the GoSL put forward a mechanism that was opposed by the international community. This opposition prevented much-needed assistance in the initial stages. Despite the international community's opposition, the GoSL determined to implement its plan. Coordination difficulties, overlapping responsibilities among governmental institutions, and lack of resources within the government prevented the GoSL from implementing desired strategies. Furthermore, the accelerated resettlement program put forward by the GoSL further weakened the government's ability to face the challenges of reconstructing Northern Province. Therefore, the GoSL had to use its military capabilities to fill gaps in the government mechanism. By doing so, the GoSL was able to resettle over two hundred and eighty-five thousand IDPs (97% of the total) by the end of 2011, and to provide them with infrastructure facilities and livelihood opportunities. In the field of rehabilitation and reintegration, the GOSL reintegrated all ex-combatants except one thousand, who are under detention. Even with these achievements, the government believes that continuing commitment is required to further upgrade facilities provided to returnees. With that intention, GoSL has allocated Rs. 12.0 billion for development projects in Northern Province in the year 2012.

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III. THE ROLE OF THE SRI LANKAN MILITARY IN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

This chapter examines how the military used its capabilities to shape the overall reconstruction process put forward by the GoSL. This investigation will examine what enabled the military to perform post-conflict reconstruction successfully, as well as what role the military plays in the process of reconstruction in the absence of a formal peace accord. It will also examine what military capabilities have been used in reconstruction, whether the military needs to redefine its missions in the present environment, and finally, whether the military's capacity will undermine the state's capacity.

While doing so, this chapter will argue that the government's decision to use the military for post-conflict reconstruction has improved its response to resettlement, reconstruction, and reintegration. Furthermore, this chapter argues that the use of the military to improve state capacity in infrastructure development has not diminished the military's warmaking capabilities.

A. SRI LANKAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, DISASTER RESPONSE, AND CIVIL ADMINISTRATION

Prior training on projects related to reconstruction is required to carry out an effective and efficient contribution to post-conflict reconstruction. Since Sri Lanka is a developing country, resources for national development are limited; therefore, the Sri Lankan military has been mobilized to carry out national development projects. Some of the functions the military is trained to carry out during wartime have been used for nation-building projects such as the construction of airfields, stadiums, pavilions, bridges, roads, causeways, culverts, schools, playgrounds, and water tanks for agriculture and canals. The army has also installed underground cables and manholes, and designed and constructed infrastructure and earthworks for national infrastructure-development projects, including dams. It has also performed jungle clearing for new settlements and cultivation under "Mahaweli Development" and builds housing units.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Sri Lanka Army, *Sri Lanka Army: 50 Years On, 1949–1999*, 908–910.

While the Sri Lankan navy and air force participated in national development projects such as roads, their contributions have been minimal, due to limited numbers and capabilities. The navy and air force are instrumental in relief operations during natural disasters, which Sri Lanka too frequently experiences. In addition to responding to frequent flash floods, the military was heavily involved in reconstruction and relief operations following the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which devastated coastal areas and took more than 40,000 lives.¹⁵²

These military contributions to national development continued even during the conflict, during which military engineers were involved in national-development projects in north-central, central, and western Sri Lanka. Contributions to nation-building projects, post-tsunami reconstruction, and the construction of roads and bridges in the Eastern Province have given the military the hands-on experience required to support post-conflict reconstruction following the end of hostilities.

Immediately after the conflict, provisional governmental institutions in former LTTE-held areas were not functioning. The decision to speed up resettlement, along with international pressure, required that the GoSL reestablish civilian administration in formerly LTTE-held areas.¹⁵³ Damaged infrastructure and safety concerns due to extensive use of mines and IEDs, along with requirements to unearth hidden LTTE weapon caches, however, prevented immediate re-establishment of provisional government institutions in former LTTE-held areas. Therefore, the only option available for the GoSL was to use the military for administration in support of resettlement and reconstruction until the establishment of provisional civil administration. This allowed the GoSL to expedite resettlement and reconstruction in formerly LTTE-held areas.

The military's role in government-aid administration is hardly new. Samuel Finer argues that "in less developed economies, it is easier for military to function as

¹⁵² Marion Hughes, "Sri Lanka's Armed Forces at the Heart of the Tsunami Relief Effort," *Peacekeeping English Project, British Council*, Issue 18, April 2005, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/pep18.pdf> (accessed January 11, 2011).

¹⁵³ Hilary Rajakarunanayake, "Government working on a plan to resettle IDPs within 180 days—Sri Lanka President," *Asia Tribune*, May 24, 2009, <http://www.asiantribune.com/?q=node/17869> (accessed December 23, 2011).

administrators.”¹⁵⁴ Finer claims that this is possible due to military “superiority in organization, high emotionalized symbolic status, and monopoly of arms.”¹⁵⁵ In Sri Lanka during the 1988–90 JVP insurrection, the government appointed military officers as civil administrators in conflict-plagued districts where the provisional civil administration could not function. Most of the officers who served during this period are still in active service. In addition, the military served as administrators in villages that bordered on conflict zones. Furthermore, conditions in the Northern Province, such as underdevelopment, unsafe conditions, and the need for a mechanism to support GoSL resettlement and reconstruction, found the military occupying administrative functions in support of reconstruction and resettlement, even though not fully trained to function as administrators.

B. IMPLICATIONS OF THE ABSENCE OF A PEACE ACCORD

The total defeat of the LTTE in 2009 has facilitated military-led reconstruction. Cristina Steenkamp argues that peace accords “often do not bring about a real and lasting end to violence.”¹⁵⁶ Post-conflict violence can erupt due to misunderstandings between the signatories of the peace accord or because terms may be unacceptable to factions within the parties to the agreement; following the end of the Maoist insurgency, Nepal experienced a similar situation. Furthermore, the actors who signed the peace accord may try to retain their arms, in violation of the accord. Third-party brokers who try to disarm them may encounter violence. This was the case in Sri Lanka following the 1987 Indo–Lankan peace accord, when the LTTE refused to hand over its weapons as agreed and instead returned to violence.¹⁵⁷ Florence Gaub argues that 43.6 percent of countries return to violence in the first five years following a conflict.¹⁵⁸ Of course, DDR in a

¹⁵⁴ Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2002) xv.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Christina Steenkamp, *Violence and Post-War Reconstruction: Managing Insecurity in the Aftermath of Peace Accords* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2009) 1.

¹⁵⁷ Asoka Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy*, 134–155.

¹⁵⁸ Florence Gaub, *Military Integration after Civil War: Multiethnic Armies, Identity and Post-conflict Reconstruction* (New York: Routledge, 2011) 3.

formal sense has not been a problem in Sri Lanka, though concerns remain that former LTTE combatants merged with IDPs and escaped to the south, leaving behind hidden arms caches. So far, however, fears of renewed violence have failed to materialize in the aftermath of the LTTE's crushing defeat.

The absences of a peace accord and post-conflict violence have facilitated speedy implementation of reconstruction in Sri Lanka. Cristina Steenkamp argues that “post-accord violence holds serious implications for the reconstruction of the state.”¹⁵⁹ Whether or not there is a peace accord, violence can inhibit implementation of a reconstruction process. Even though parties signed the peace accord, they may not be able to develop a clear understanding of implementation of reconstructive strategies, due to lingering, persistent mistrust. This will delay the implementation of reconstruction and prevent benefits from flowing to the affected population. Furthermore, violence and uncertainty can distract the international community and discourage donors prepared to support post-conflict reconstruction. Notably, a peace accord may encourage a non-state actor to object to the military presence in reconstruction. It can severely affect a government's ability to implement reconstruction through civilian agencies or INGOs, which may fall victim to violence or intimidation. INGOs require considerable time to acquire the funds needed to support reconstruction. The nonexistence of a peace accord in Sri Lanka has helped the GoSL ensure security throughout the country—especially in the Northern Province—and focus the military immediately on reconstruction and reintegration.

C. ROLE PLAYED BY THE SRI LANKAN MILITARY IN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

The military contribution to post-conflict reconstruction began immediately after the rescue of civilians from the LTTE's grip. At the very end of the conflict, the LTTE forcibly took the entire civilian population living in formerly LTTE-controlled areas to a

¹⁵⁹ Christina, *Violence and Post-War Reconstruction: Managing Insecurity in the Aftermath of Peace Accords*, 2.

tiny stretch of land as LTTE-controlled areas contracted.¹⁶⁰ This caused the Sri Lankan commanders to slow the tempo of military operations in an attempt to save the lives of civilian hostages. The LTTE constrained, punished, or killed civilians who tried to cross over to government-controlled areas, despite requests made by the government and international community.¹⁶¹ Although the international community and GoSL criticized the LTTE action, no remedies were available to rescue civilians from their grip. Furthermore, the LTTE used civilians as human shields, to construct defensive positions and carry out other actions to support their war effort.¹⁶² Therefore, although much criticized, the military had no choice but to pursue operations to rescue civilians.

The military had to plan rescues carefully, with special emphasis on minimizing civilian casualties while engaging the terrorists militarily. Large numbers of security personnel sacrificed their lives in attempts to rescue civilians. LTTE suicide cadres disguised as civilians crossed over to government-controlled areas and blew themselves up, killing civilians, including children and soldiers who assisted civilians.¹⁶³ These circumstances compelled the GoSL to implement security measures, even after the defeat of the LTTE, until all possible ex-combatants were apprehended. Thus, although the military was actively involved in post-conflict reconstruction, the majority of security personnel were engaged in their classic security role.

¹⁶⁰ K T Rajasinham, "More than 15000 Stray Cattle Saved by the Army, to be handed over to the rightful Owners," 27 December 2011, *Asian Tribune*, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/12/26/more-150000-stray-cattle-saved-sri-lankan-army-be-handed-over-rightful-owners> (accessed December 29, 2011).

¹⁶¹ Gorden Weiss, *The Cage: The fight for Sri Lanka & The Last Days of The Tamil Tigers* (London: The Bodley Head. 2011) 96–104. See also, Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka's Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in the Northern Province 2011*, 80. See also, International Crisis Group "War Crimes in Sri Lanka." (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2010), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/191-war-crimes-in-sri-lanka.aspx> See also, Human Rights Watch, "Sri Lanka: Besieged, Displaced, and Detained: The Flight of Civilians in Sri Lanka's Vanni Region" (Human Right Watch, December 2008) 2. See also, Ministry of Defence and Urban development, "Our Main Concern is Safety of IDPs' Says President," http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20090221_08 (accessed December 30, 2011).

¹⁶² Gorden Weiss, *The Cage: the Fight for Sri Lanka & the Last Days of the Tamil Tigers*, 96. See also, Stephen L. Battle, "Lessons in Legitimacy: The LTTE End Game of 2007-2009," (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2010) 30.

¹⁶³ H.A.N Hapuarachchi, S Ranasighe and K.M.U Wijerathna, "IDPs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Combatants."

As the military witnessed the hardships that civilians had undergone during the final part of the conflict, the military devoted themselves, as far as security duties allowed, to providing humanitarian assistance. Civil administration had not yet been restored; thus the military was tasked to handle all civilians able to cross over to government-controlled areas. It was solely the Sri Lanka military, especially the army, that received the civilians and understood most fully the hardships they had undergone at the hands of the LTTE. Civilians crossed to government-controlled areas with only those possessions they could carry, many of them assisting the elderly, children, sick, and wounded.

Military assistance to civilians transiting to IDP centers helped to develop trust between civilians and the military. Some required immediate medical assistance. Most were without food and water. The military initially donated their own food rations until the GoSL arranged meals for IDPs. All those who required immediate medical assistance were taken care of by military medical teams attached to fighting formations.¹⁶⁴ The military's casualty-evacuation equipment, such as helicopters and military ambulances, were used to evacuate pregnant mothers, elders, and wounded civilians to civilian medical facilities—especially to the Vavuniya, Anuradapura, and Trincomalee general hospitals.¹⁶⁵ Civilians's basic needs were looked after by the military until they transferred to welfare villages especially prepared for them.¹⁶⁶ The immediate provision of military humanitarian assistance jumpstarted the first step of winning the hearts and minds of civilians, while the military was filling the gap in the government reconstruction process.

To face the unexpected deluge of IDPs, the GoSL appointed the army chief of staff as a competent authority and, upon his retirement, replaced him with the commander of security-force headquarters, Wanni (commander of Security Force North Central).¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Colombo Page, "Competent Authority to Supervise the Welfare of IDPs,," April 24, 2009, http://www.colombopage.com/archive_09/April24151421RA.html (accessed January 28, 2012). See also, Government of Sri Lanka Extra Ordinary Gazette 297/1 of 2009.

Though the government identified its obligations to IDPs, GoSL plans to house them in welfare villages were based on figures that proved to be desperately underestimated. The large influx of IDPs strained government resources. Most INGOs and the international community concluded that the GoSL was incapable of handling the situation, which was developing into a humanitarian crisis.¹⁶⁸

The competent authority was entrusted with the “provision of all essential facilities to the persons of Northern Province who are displaced and for the administration and operation within Northern Province.”¹⁶⁹ He carried out this assigned task by coordinating government institutions, agencies, and the military while obtaining support from INGOs. The newly appointed competent authority used the military for speedy construction of additional IDP centers. Tasks entrusted to the military, especially the army, included selecting suitable ground for construction of new welfare villages and earthworks, jungle clearance, construction of an interior road network and temporary drainage system, digging of toilet pits, and erection of temporary shelters. Such actions taken by the military prevented the humanitarian crisis predicted by the international community and INGOs. Later Neil Buhne, UN resident coordinator for Sri Lanka, praised the GoSL for this accomplishment.¹⁷⁰

Appointment of the chief of staff of the army as the competent authority in the Northern Province not only facilitated the provision of basic humanitarian needs and the overcoming of the crisis, but also the implementation of a government strategy. While establishing additional IDP centers, the competent authority had taken steps to provide IDP centers with banking facilities, postal services, electricity, communication facilities with international direct dialing, satellite television, schools, healthcare and medical centers, vocational training, shops and markets, and entertainment. Although active-duty military assisted the administration of welfare villages at the beginning, they were later

¹⁶⁸ Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), “Sri Lanka: ‘Too many people’ at huge IDP camp – UN,” June 11, 2009, <http://www.irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportId=84805>, (accessed February 20, 2012)

¹⁶⁹ Government of Sri Lanka Extra Ordinary Gazette 297/1 of 2009.

¹⁷⁰ Government of Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka’s Humanitarian Effort: Presidential Task Force Resettlement, Development and Security in the Northern Province 2011*, 85.

restricted to the periphery of IDP centers. For efficient handling of IDP centers, retired army officers and enlisted persons were mobilized through the ministry of resettlement to administer welfare villages. Their salaries were paid by the UNHCR. Appointment of a senior military officer as a competent authority helped GoSL coordinate the speedy provision of humanitarian assistance to IDPs and to use the military to construct welfare villages in an efficient, coordinated manner—which helped overcome the shortage of resources and coordination difficulties within the GoSL.

The presence of service officers with the most seniority in the PTF (the presidential task force for resettlement, development, and security in the Northern Province, empowered to formulate and implement the strategy for post-conflict reconstruction) helped the GoSL to coordinate its program and use the military at the highest level. Though individual responsibilities entrusted to PTF members were not evident, members of the PTF have taken part in the formulation and implementation of the strategic plan by contributing and coordinating institutional capacity. Therefore, it is evident that activities carried out by the military at the operational and tactical level for reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration have guidance and instruction from the highest level of command.

Identifying ex-combatants, disarming them, and separating them from civilians helps to establish sustainable peace. One of the primary tasks the military carried out after rescuing civilians was identification of the ex-combatants who had merged with IDPs. Some LTTE cadres surrendered to military units voluntarily after crossing over to government-controlled areas.¹⁷¹ The military took steps to register the ex-combatants in the presence of the ICRC and representatives of the GoSL.¹⁷² Identification of other ex-combatants, merged with IDPs, was an uphill task, complicated by limited intelligence. This was later overcome by captured LTTE documents, informants, and IDPs who volunteered to provide information about the ex-combatants among them. In this way, more than 3,000 ex-LTTE cadres who had merged with IDPs were arrested during the first three months. Immediate steps were taken to separate them from IDPs and house

¹⁷¹ H.A.N Hapuarachchi, “Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Combatants.”

¹⁷² Ibid.

them separately under adequate security. Actions taken by the military at the outset have helped immensely to change the perception of ex-combatants who were “indoctrinated with vicious stories of the security forces and had developed hatred towards the military.”¹⁷³ Furthermore, ex-combatants helped military units identify and apprehend LTTE cadres who had escaped arrest or surrender. Still, a considerable number of ex-combatants are at large, especially in foreign countries. The military commitment to apprehend former LTTE cadres helped the GoSL maintain law and order, which in turn improved the immediate GoSL response to post-conflict reconstruction in the Northern Province.

Rehabilitation and the successful reintegration into society—with a livelihood—is required to prevent ex-combatants from resorting to violence again. To carry out this complicated process, GoSL appointed a major general from the Sri Lankan army as the commissioner general of rehabilitation, whose task was to recognize the degree of participation of the individual ex-combatants in the conflict and to design and institute a rehabilitation program before re-integrating them into society.¹⁷⁴ The commissioner general initiated a program to change the perception of the indoctrinated ex-combatants during the period of rehabilitation, which included “vocational training and de-radicalization, including spiritual learning and meditation.”¹⁷⁵ The commissioner general of rehabilitation was again instrumental in seeking a livelihood for ex-combatants upon their rehabilitation.

Though many civilians were involved in the process, the military was more focused towards the day-to-day handling of ex-combatants, though it occasionally provided vocational training during the period of rehabilitation.

While the military was less engaged in rehabilitation, it was heavily involved in reintegration, starting once the rehabilitated ex-combatant was reintegrated to the society. The military involvement in reintegration was twofold. Its first concern was security.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Sri Lanka Gazette Notification 1611/29 of 2009.

¹⁷⁵ Shakya Lahiru Pathmalal, “The Role of Ex-Combatants in Reconciliation,” *Sunday Leader*, December 14, 2011, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2011/12/04/the-role-of-ex-combatants-in-reconciliation/> (accessed January 3, 2012).

Second, the military assisted the reintegrated ex-combatants in finding livelihood opportunities. Soon after reintegration, respective military headquarters and police were informed about the release of rehabilitated ex-combatants by the bureau of the commissioner general.¹⁷⁶ The military carries out regular monitoring of reintegrated ex-combatants to prevent them from resorting to terrorist activities and to monitor the progress of reintegration. Though the GoSL has taken many steps to find suitable employment for ex-combatants, a considerable number remain unemployed.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, the military helps reintegrated ex-combatants find employment, either by helping them find work or providing equipment, capital, and advice to start self-employment.¹⁷⁸ The military finds suitable donors and coordinates the process either with the support of personal donations or by personnel.

The development of infrastructure, along with security, has contributed to stability and helped to transform a fragile peace into lasting peace. Viable physical infrastructure is essential for the development of the economy. If the infrastructure is damaged or destroyed, economic development will stagnate and may lead to crime, violence, and political discontent. The military was instrumental in providing adequate security to the country as a whole and especially to Northern Province, preventing any terrorist incident since the defeat of terrorism in Sri Lanka.¹⁷⁹ Seventy percent of the area de-mined in the Northern Province has been cleared by the military, while the INGO and NGO

¹⁷⁶ H.A.N Hapuarachchi, "Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Combatants."

¹⁷⁷ Elmo Leonard, "Thousands of ex-LTTE soldiers still unemployed," *Lakbima*, Vol. 05. No. 29, January 1, 2012, http://www.lakbimanews.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4059:thousands-of-ex-ltte-soldiers-still-unemployed-&catid=40:news&Itemid=64 (accessed January 28, 2012).

¹⁷⁸ Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nation, "Income of Reintegrated Ex-LTTE Combatants to be Made Stable with Army's 'Aloe Vera' Farming Project," <http://www.army.lk/detailed.php?NewsId=4194> (accessed January 13, 2012), See also, Government of Sri Lanka, "Troops, Ex-LTTE Combatants Breed Crabs," 26 January 2012, http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/Current_Affairs/ca201201/20120126troops_ex_ltte_combatants.htm (accessed January 29, 2012).

¹⁷⁹ Speech delivered by Professor Rohan Gunarathna, Head ICPVTR at Lakshman Kadiragamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies on, January 24, 2012, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20120124_speech (accessed January 25, 2012).

contribution stands at thirty percent.¹⁸⁰ These activities provided an opportunity for reestablishment of civil administration in the area, though at the beginning, the civil administration lacked the capacity required to support returnees.

The military has to play the primary role in resettlement in newly liberated areas. Due to a shortage of services in newly resettled areas, the military was tasked with providing assistance on renovation and construction of damaged houses.¹⁸¹ Even infantry were utilized to construct temporary housing for returnees whose houses had been completely destroyed. Meanwhile, the military has carried out activities such as reconstruction of roads and bridges; cleaning of wells; renovation and reconstruction of irrigation systems; renovation and reconstruction of public utilities such as schools, religious places, and medical centers; and clearance of agricultural lands that had not been used for years.¹⁸² The military has monitored and coordinated the livelihood support provided to returnees by the GoSL, INGOs and NGOs, preventing any dual recipients.¹⁸³ Per central-bank statistics, Northern Province recorded the highest economic growth in Sri Lanka during the year 2010.¹⁸⁴

The military is engaged in many activities in the Northern Province that are aimed at further strengthening relations with civilians. It is involved in many activities: donation campaigns; organization of medical camps; education seminars and sport championships; assistance to religious festivals; tree-planting programs; educational tours to the south,

¹⁸⁰ Palitha, "Reconciliation, Reconstruction: Sri Lanka Ready for Challenge."

¹⁸¹ Civil Military Cooperation Jaffna, "President Hands Over New Houses to Keeramalai Resettled Families," July 19, 2011, http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Cimicnews_2011_07_19_2.php (accessed January 28, 2012). See also, Amadoru Amarajeewa, "Sambandan Happy Over Houses from Army," December 31, 2011, Infolanka, <http://www.infolanka.com/news/IL/dm331.htm> (accessed January 3, 2012).

¹⁸² Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nation, "65 Division Hands Over Two More New Houses to Resettled Civilians," <http://www.army.lk/detailed.php?NewsId=4195> (accessed January 28, 2012).

¹⁸³ Civil Military Coordination Jaffna, "Fishing Nets & Safety Lamps Given to Kilaly Fishing Families," February 4, 2012, http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Cimicnews_2012_02_04.php (accessed February 5, 2012).

¹⁸⁴ Lanka Business on Line, "Peace Divided: Sri Lanka war-torn north shows highest economic growth: CB," July 17, 2011, <http://www.lankabusinessonline.com/fullstory.php?nid=2035313159> (accessed January 28, 2012).

and assistance to needy families.¹⁸⁵ It has also taken steps to round up more than 150,000 stray cattle and hand them to their rightful owners.¹⁸⁶ Activities carried out by the military to assist the returnees have further developed mutual understanding between military and civilians. However, activities undertaken by the military in support of post-conflict reconstruction have been interpreted by some INGOs, such as Minority Rights Group International, as “militarism” in the Northern Province.¹⁸⁷

D. MILITARY PREPAREDNESS AFTER THE CONFLICT

Though the military was heavily involved in post-conflict reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration, it continues to carry out its traditional security functions. All activities related to post-conflict reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration—including administration in newly resettled areas—have been carried out through civil-affairs officers (CAOs) in regional [?] headquarters. CAOs have been given the responsibility of providing:

assistance to government agents/ divisional secretaries on implementing activities such as resettlement, livelihood development, infrastructure development for the purpose of uplifting the living standard of the community, monitoring of PTF approved projects, monitoring activities undertaken by INGOs and NGOs, provide required assistance with the coordination of line ministries and departments, provide require assistance to win the hearts and minds of the population, organize and monitor livelihood development programs and introduction of donors and well-wishers and arrange humanitarian assistance.¹⁸⁸

The monitoring of reintegrated cadres does not fall under the purview of CAOs. Since the responsibility for reconstruction and resettlement is entrusted to CAOs, the military

¹⁸⁵ Civil Military Cooperation Jaffna, “Championpattu Civilians Get Christmas Gifts from Army,” December 21, 2010, http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Cimicnews_2010_12_22.php (accessed January 28, 2012), See also, Civil Military Cooperation Jaffna, “523 Brigade Organizes English Language Seminar for O/L Students,” http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Cimicnews_2010_12_12.php (accessed January 28, 2012), Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nation, “64 Division Donates Cement to Kovil Development,” <http://www.army.lk/detailed.php?NewsId=4245> (accessed January 28, 2012).

¹⁸⁶ K T Rajasinhham, “More than 15000 Stray Cattle Saved by the Army, to be handed over to the rightful Owners.”

¹⁸⁷ Minority Rights Group International, *No War, no Peace: Denial of Minority Rights and Justice in Sri Lanka*, (UK, Minority Right Group, 2011), 1-12.

¹⁸⁸ Standing Orders for Civil Affairs Officers, Sri Lanka Army.

retained most of its members for conventional roles, engaging in reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration.

Most of the infrastructure-development projects have been undertaken by field-engineer regiments and engineer-service regiments. Two of the field-engineer regiments were converted into a de-mining regiment and a plant-engineer regiment, to facilitate post-conflict reconstruction and resettlement. Though other field-engineer regiments are also involved in the reconstruction process, they have been kept under their fighting formations. Other than the existing engineer-service regiments, five new engineer-service regiments have been formed to boost infrastructure development.¹⁸⁹ Other fighting formations remain intact, focusing on their conventional roles. However, involvement of some infantry regiments in the initial stages of resettlement to support returning families was required. Once the returnees were resettled, infantry focused primarily on their assigned security role. In the meantime, the military has gradually withdrawn from post-conflict infrastructure development in the Northern Province as the state capacity, developed through donors and INGOs involvement, and the military has started withdrawing their administrative work as a civil administration becomes fully established and gains capacity.¹⁹⁰

Since the defeat of the LTTE in 2009, there has also been a demand by civilians for military downsizing, restructuring, and reform.¹⁹¹ This has been widely discussed among the military, too. However, downsizing the military is possible only if the threat is diminished. The LTTE is a well-established organization with a considerable number of international offices and front organizations.¹⁹² Defeated militarily, LTTE's international

¹⁸⁹ ARO 110/2009, See also, ARO 65/2009, See also, ARO 51/1010 See also, ARO 75/2009, See also, ARO 74/2009.

¹⁹⁰ Civil Military Cooperation Jaffna, "Military Presence in Jaffna is Gradually Being Reduced, Jaffna Commander Tells Aussie Parliamentarians," December 13, 2011, http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Cimicnews_2011_12_13.php (accessed January 28, 2012).

¹⁹¹ Eleanor Pavey and Chris Smith, *Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Security Sector Reform in Sri Lanka* (Vancouver, Canada: Simon Fraser University, 2009) 190-208.

¹⁹² *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam*, Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism, Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, 14. <http://jtic.janes.com.libproxy.nps.edu/JDIC/JTIC/nonTaxonomyselection.do?nonTaxnom..> (accessed August 15, 2011).

network is still functioning.¹⁹³ Successful in eliminating the LTTE, the GoSL is presently heavily involved in curbing the LTTE international organization. GoSL has arrested the former LTTE international wing leader “KP,” stationed in Malaysia in 2010.¹⁹⁴ Even though the GoSL is committed to curtailing the LTTE international organizations, so far its ability to do so has been limited.

Meantime LTTE activities established the “Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam,” with the ultimate aim of establishing a separate state in 2010.¹⁹⁵ Some LTTE men who escaped arrest or rehabilitation remain at large in Sri Lanka.¹⁹⁶ For these reasons, the secretary of defense of Sri Lanka has emphasized the possibility of a “reemergence of the LTTE” in Sri Lanka.¹⁹⁷ The commissioner general of rehabilitation has warned reintegrated ex-combatants not to get involved in unlawful activities aimed at overthrowing the government.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, although the LTTE was militarily defeated, its threat has not entirely disappeared, and so far there is no evidence to suggest that GoSL is planning to downsize its military.

The military has taken many steps to retain combat effectiveness. During the conflict, the military was unable to send troops to professional military-education courses, or even local courses, due to their commitment to the conflict and the shortage of manpower. The little professional military training that did occur during the conflict was focused on enhancing the skills required in the ongoing conflict. Most of the training was carried out in the field within the conflict zone. After the conflict, the military has taken

¹⁹³ Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nation, “National Security is Still a Critical Issue, Though Peace has Dawned- Secretary Defence,” January 11, 2012, <http://www.army.lk/detailed.php?NewsId=4199> (accessed January 12, 2012),

¹⁹⁴ Mandana Ismail Abeywickrema, “The Militarization of Sri Lanka’s Diplomatic and Administrative Services,” *Sunday Leader* <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2011/01/23/the-militarisation-of-sri-lanka%E2%80%99s-diplomatic-and-administrative-services/> (accessed January 27, 2012).

¹⁹⁵ PR Web, “Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam Becomes Officials: Rectifies the Constitution, Elects Prime Minister, Speaker, and Create Senate ,” October 4, 2010, <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2010/10/prweb4601074.htm> (accessed January 28, 2012), See also, Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam-USA, “Mission Statement,” <http://www.tgte-us.org/mission.html> (accessed January 28, 2012),

¹⁹⁶ Sri Lanka Army, Defenders of the Nation, “National Security Still a Critical Issue Though Peace have Dawned’ - Secretary Defence.”

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Dinouk Kolombage, “Ex-LTTE Rebels Warned,” *Sunday Leader*, January 15, 2012, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2012/01/15/ex-ltte-rebels-warned/> (accessed January 16, 2012),

steps to increase the number of members attending professional military training, locally and abroad.¹⁹⁹ The Sri Lankan army has established its first state-of-the-art army training command (ARTRAC) to “streamline and reformulate army training programs to suit international standards and local requirements” to meet future challenges.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, the military established an officer career-development center (OCDC) aimed at “professional development of knowledge on national/international security affairs, not only among tri service military students, but also among public officials and other academics.”²⁰¹ In the meantime, the military has strengthened its research and development efforts and was able to test-fly the first-ever Sri Lankan-made, unmanned, aerial vehicle.²⁰² The military has refrained from using their special forces, support arms, armor and artillery, service regiments, and fighting formations of navy and air force for reconstruction and resettlement activities. Their military preparedness has not been hindered, due to their noninvolvement in reconstruction. While reconstruction in the Northern Province was in process, the military conducted joint military exercises codenamed “Cormorant Strike I” and “Cormorant Strike II” in Trincomalee and Mannar, with the participation of “about 4,000 army, navy and air force officers and other ranks.”²⁰³ Therefore, it is evident that the Sri Lankan military has retained its conventional capabilities, despite its commitment to post-conflict reconstruction, resettlement, and reintegration.

¹⁹⁹ Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka Army Training Directive 2011 (Colombo, Sri Lanka Army, 2011). See also, Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka Army Training Directive 2010 (Colombo, Sri Lanka Army, 2010). See also, Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka Army Training Directive 2009 (Colombo, Sri Lanka Army, 2009).

²⁰⁰ Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, Sri Lanka, “Army Reformulating its doctrinal module Establishes its First ARTRAC for Future Generations,” January 30, 2012, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20120130_02 (accessed February 2, 2012).

²⁰¹ Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, Sri Lanka, “Officers Career Development Center Inaugurated at Buththala,” January 24, 2012, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20120124_01 (accessed February 2, 2012).

²⁰² Pakistan Defence, “Sri Lanka Upgrade Air-to air Capabilities,” February 23, 2011, <http://www.defence.pk/forums/military-forum/94653-sri-lanka-upgrade-air-air-capabilities.html> (accessed January 30, 2012).

²⁰³ Janes military and security assessment, Armed Forces, Sri Lanka, September 9, 2011. <http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-South-Asia/Armed-forces-Sri-Lanka.html> (accessed January 29, 2012).

Participation of the military in United Nations missions will enhance the professionalism of the military. Deborah Norden argues that participation in international missions provides an opportunity for military to “practice their profession in a publicly accepted, and even lauded manner.”²⁰⁴ Janowitz argues that the officer in the constabulary force “is subjected to civilian control, not only because of the rule of law and tradition, but also because of self-imposed professional standards and meaningful integration of civilian values.”²⁰⁵ Meantime, participation of the military in United Nations missions will internationalize the military while providing an opportunity for new professional roles.²⁰⁶ Furthermore, the Sri Lankan military conducts one-and-a-half month’s training for its members departing on United Nations peacekeeping missions in a separate training institution. Even amid the conflict, Sri Lankan military participated in UN peacekeeping missions, contributing one battalion to Haiti and many observers to other missions. “Sri Lanka is currently ranked the 21st contributor of troops and police personnel to UN peacekeeping operations in terms of men deployed in several parts of the world.”²⁰⁷ Unfortunately, United Nations peacekeeping missions brought discredit to Sri Lanka following incidents of sexual abuse by 108 peacekeepers in Haiti in 2007.²⁰⁸ However, the military took stern action against those found guilty, including the commanding officer of the contingent, who was held accountable for the actions of his men. This prevented any further incident to date.

With the end of Sri Lanka’s long conflict, GoSL is looking for opportunities to increase the number of personnel sent on United Nations peacekeeping missions.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁴ Deborah L. Norden, “Keeping the Peace, Outside and In: Argentina’s UN Missions,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 2, Issue. 3, 1995, 341.

²⁰⁵ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (London: The Free Press of Glencoe Collier-Macmillan Limited) 420.

²⁰⁶ Deborah, *Keeping the Peace*, 332.

²⁰⁷ “UN Deployment: SL among major Contributors,” *The Island*, December 14, 2011, http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=41224, (accessed December 24, 2011).

²⁰⁸ BBC News, “S Lanka Troops Abused Haitians,” November 2, 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7075866.stm (accessed March 6, 2012).

²⁰⁹ UN News Service, “Sri Lanka Pledges Enhanced Support for UN Peacekeeping Missions,” September 23, 2010, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?Cr=sri+lanka&Cr1=&NewsID=36093> (accessed January 25, 2012).

These missions provide two benefits for a country like Sri Lanka. First, it enhances military professionalism. Some of the Sri Lankan officers who participated in United Nations peacekeeping missions got the opportunity to work in the United Nations headquarters. Deborah Norden argues that the “professional learning which occurs in the missions passes from individual to the institution.”²¹⁰ Participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions provides an opportunity to interact with more professional and democratically advanced militaries and to use modern equipment not used in Sri Lanka. Second, it facilitates foreign exchange and contacts. It provides monetary incentives for participants, as well as for the GoSL. Therefore, the GoSL’s decision to send more troops on United Nations missions will further ease the government burden of maintaining the military, which furthers the GoSL intention to maintain the military at its present strength. Although the GoSL managed to increase the military’s strength, it has yet to obtain major contributions from the United Nations.

E. WILL MILITARY CAPACITY UNDERMINE STATE CAPACITY?

The military involvement in post-conflict reconstruction has not been restricted to the Northern Province. The military has undertaken many national–development projects in other parts of the country as well. Prominent projects undertaken by the military outside the Northern Province include development and construction of roads, earthworks for infrastructure development, cleaning of internal waterways and establishment of inland water transportation, construction and management of stadiums and construction of bridges, environmental programs, beatification in Colombo, and repair and renovation of roads and tanks in national parks.²¹¹ These projects undertaken by the military have enabled the GoSL to save a considerable amount of money in infrastructure development in the entire country.²¹² However, not all military units have been used for projects outside the Northern Province. Only specialized military regiments in construction and

²¹⁰ Deborah , *Keeping the Peace*, 341.

²¹¹ Ministry of Defence and Urban Development Sri Lanka, “Development Program to Modernize Colombo City and its Surroundings,” December 23, 2011, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20111223_05 (accessed December 27, 2011).

²¹² No author, “Army save Rs 3.7 billion”, *Sunday Leader*, January 18, 2012, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2012/01/02/army-saved-govt-rs-3-7-billion/> (accessed January 20, 2012).

infrastructure development have been tasked to carry out infrastructure development projects with the help of a very few infantrymen. Use of the military for construction projects outside the Northern Province has been precipitated by a shortage of resources and capital within the GoSL and the desire to employ military capabilities productively.

The impact and success of military involvement in Sri Lanka for infrastructure development has been recognized by other government institutions as well. Some government institutions have requested the service of the military for infrastructure development. The ministry of education has “made a request to the ministry of defense on the possibility of the security forces’ building 1000 national schools at a cost of Rs3.5 billion [approximately \$ 30 million].”²¹³ Over and above these projects, the military has taken steps to construct a five-star hotel in Colombo.²¹⁴ With these developments, the Sri Lankan army is presently studying the possibilities of establishing a construction company under a separate directorate.²¹⁵ A separate directorate to look into the development of government infrastructure will compete with other construction institutions, in accordance with government-tender procedures.

Establishment of a separate directorate will help directorates to concentrate on infrastructure development while enabling the army to preserve its operational capabilities. Since the military has such inherent characteristics as task orientation and discipline, civilian organizations may find it difficult to compete. Therefore, establishment of a separate directorate for infrastructure development may well undermine the state capacity while eroding civilian capacities, especially in activities relating to infrastructure development.

²¹³ No author, “Army to Build 1000 National Schools?,” *Daily Mirror*, January 20, 2012, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/16201-army-to-build-1000-national-schools.html> (accessed January 20, 2012).

²¹⁴ Supun Dias, “Army to Build a Five Star Hotel in Colombo,” *Daily Mirror*, November 6, 2011, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/14575-army-to-build-a-five-star-hotel-in-colombo.html> (accessed January 20, 2012).

²¹⁵ No author, “Company to be formed by Army to undertake projects,” January 19, 2012, *Daily Mirror*, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/16179-company-to-be-formed-by-army-to-undertake-projects.html> (accessed January 21, 2012).

Both during the conflict and after, the government appointed both active and retired military officers to administrative positions in the government. Some of the primary administrative positions in the Northern and Eastern provinces, such as governor and government agent (the highest district-level civil authority) in Trincomalee district are presently held by retired military officers.²¹⁶ The former commander of the Sri Lankan navy during the period of the final offensive against LTTE holds the post of secretary to the ministry of highways and road development.²¹⁷ Furthermore, many active-duty officers are involved in civil administration in the fields of resettlement and reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration, and urban development.²¹⁸ Meanwhile, after the conflict, a few active military officers served, and are presently serving, as diplomats in the Sri Lankan foreign services and the United Nations.²¹⁹ In the Northern Province, active-duty military were involved in administration at the local-government level.²²⁰ Appointments of military officials to administrative and diplomatic missions have “caused friction between military personnel, career diplomats, and public officials.”²²¹ The main reason behind this friction is the adverse impact on the careers of civilians who are eligible to hold the same posts. However, the appointment of military officials to administrative and diplomatic missions has been based on a government strategy of ensuring the sustainable peace in Sri Lanka.

²¹⁶ Minority Rights Group International, “No War, No Peace: Denial of Minority Rights and Justice in Sri Lanka,” 12.

²¹⁷ Dhaneshi Yatawara, “Roads Mainstay of Development,” *Sunday Observer*, March 14, 2010, <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2010/03/14/fea05.asp> (accessed January 29, 2011).

²¹⁸ Nandana Wicramasinghe, “Sri Lankan Military Takes Over Urban Development,” *Worlds Socialist Web*, May 13, 2010 <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/may2010/sril-m13.shtml>, (accessed January 25, 2012), See also, Minority Rights Group International, “No War, No Peace: Denial of Minority Rights and Justice in Sri Lanka,” 12.

²¹⁹ Charles Haviland, “UN Role for EX-Army General Shavendra Silva,” *BBC News Asia*, January 27, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16763509> (accessed January 28, 2012). See also, Mandana Ismail Abeywickrema, “The Militarization of Sri Lanka’s Diplomatic and Administrative Services,” *Sunday Leader* <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2011/01/23/the-militarisation-of-sri-lanka%E2%80%99s-diplomatic-and-administrative-services/> (accessed January 27, 2012).

²²⁰ Minority Rights Group International, “No War, No Peace: Denial of Minority Rights and Justice in Sri Lanka,” 12.

²²¹ Mandana Ismail Abeywickrema, “The Militarization of Sri Lanka’s Diplomatic and Administrative Services.”

The military officers who have been appointed to administrative and diplomatic missions have played a major role in curtailing the LTTE international and local networks and establishing sustainable peace in formerly conflicted areas.

After the conflict, the GoSL was under tremendous pressure from the international community with regard to war crimes and accountability. Some Western countries and INGOs pressed hard on a resolution against Sri Lanka in the United Nations and advocated the creation of an international war-crimes investigation in relation to civilians killed during the last phase of the conflict.²²² The GoSL insisted that such an investigation was not required, and the Sri Lankan president appointed a commission of inquiry called the “Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC),” in May 2010.²²³ LLRC was tasked to look into the Sri Lankan conflict and to provide recommendations for an era of healing and peace building. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the International Crisis Group declined an invitation to testify before the LLRC, highlighting that “its mandate is seriously flawed and in practice it falls far short of international standards on national commissions of inquiry.”²²⁴

The LLRC conducted its investigation and submitted its report to the president on 15 November 2011 and made it public on 16 December 2011. However, once the LLRC report was published, the international community—including the European Union—

²²² Human Rights Watch, “Sri Lanka: International Investigation Needed,” June 17, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/17/sri-lanka-international-investigation-needed> (accessed January 27, 2012) See also, BBC News, “UN Calls for Sri Lanka War Probe,” May 26, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8068905.stm (accessed January 27, 2012).

²²³ BBC Sinhala.com, “Release LLRC Report-UK,” November 21, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/sinhala/news/story/2011/11/111121_llrc_burt.shtml (accessed January 28, 2012).

²²⁴ Amnesty International, “When will they Get Justice: Failures of Sri Lanka’s Lesson Learned and Reconciliation Commission,” 2011, 6, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA37/008/2011/en/76ea6500-a9f5-4946-bf2b-7fc08bc5e37a/asa370082011en.pdf> (accessed January 24, 2012).

welcomed the recommendations made by the commission, while the United Nations is still studying the report.²²⁵

Based on recommendations forwarded by the commission, the GoSL has decided to withdraw the military from “all aspects of community life” including “civil administration.”²²⁶ This decision taken by the GoSL illustrates that GoSL has used the military for administration and community life to establish sustainable peace, speedy post-conflict reconstruction, and effective administration of formerly conflicted areas by coordinating government mechanisms and the military. However, there is no evidence of a withdrawal of the military from infrastructure-development projects aimed at national development.

F. CONCLUSION

The Sri Lankan military has contributed immensely to post-conflict reconstruction, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Assistance rendered by the military for post-conflict reconstruction started by rescuing civilians from the grip of the LTTE. The military was immediately transformed into humanitarian workers rendering basic requirements such as food, shelter, and medical care. Furthermore, the military has played a major role in the construction of welfare villages and the initial administration of basic services until taken over by appropriate civil ministries. The military has supported government resettlement strategies by using its organic capabilities to assist in reconstruction tasks such as the building of roads, bridges, public infrastructure, irrigation systems, and water tanks and the clearing of arable lands overtaken by jungle and scrub, as well as de-mining. Part of the infantry and fighting units have been involved in supporting accelerated resettlement by constructing temporary accommodation or permanent housing for those whose houses were damaged or destroyed. Furthermore, the

²²⁵ “Sri Lanka Needs Our Support Says Europe,” *Daily News*, January 28, 2012, <http://www.dailynews.lk/2012/01/28/pol01.asp> (accessed January 28, 2012). See also, Inner City Press, “As Sri Lanka Threatens Critics of LLRC, Ban Awaits Cheat Sheets of DPA, HRC” December 23, 2011, <http://www.innercitypress.com/ban3uprllrc122311.html> (accessed January 28, 2012).

²²⁶ Kalum Bandara and Yohan Perera, “Armed Forces to be Withdrawn from community Life,” *Daily Mirror*, December 17, 2011, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/15508-armed-forces-to-be-withdrawn-from-community-life.html> (accessed January 28, 2012).

military has monitored the activities of INGOs in connection with resettlement and reconstruction. It is apparent that the military has contributed not only to reconstruction and resettlement, it has actively taken part in the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants, too. Yet though the military is actively involved in the reconstructive process, it has preserved its conventional warfighting capabilities to meet any challenges. The military has also taken steps to upgrade its capabilities for infrastructure development to compete with other institutions on government-tender procedures pertaining to infrastructure development. As a whole, the military contribution has enormously assisted the government's ability to shape an effective response in post-conflict reconstruction.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study began by exploring the way in which the Sri Lankan military used its capabilities to shape the reconstruction process. It is commonly accepted that post-conflict reconstruction should be carried out principally by civilian agencies and private contractors. However, the Sri Lankan military has played a leading role for a variety of reasons, beginning with the fact that the war against the LTTE created great destruction and a tidal wave of IDPs that had to be housed. Overlapping responsibilities and coordination difficulties among government agencies, the reluctance of the international community and INGOs to support the GoSL strategy at the end of the conflict, and lack of resources within GoSL created conditions that required the government to call upon the military to assist in post-conflict reconstruction. The extreme devastation of the conflict, together with the absence of a provisional civilian administration in Northern Province after the LTTE defeat made the military, especially the army, the primary instrument of reconstruction.

The military has shaped the reconstruction process in many ways. The military commitment to reconstruction began even before the end of the conflict, by helping civilian authorities construct IDP centers. At the end of the conflict, the military carefully planned out its operations to rescue those civilians held hostage by the LTTE or under threat of LTTE attack. The military then provided humanitarian assistance, including food and medical care, until they transitioned to IDP centers. Due to the mammoth number of IDPs, the military constructed and administrated additional IDP centers until civilian agencies gained capacity. The Sri Lankan military was instrumental in carrying out development projects such as reconstruction of roads, bridges, irrigation systems, and other damaged infrastructure in formerly LTTE-held areas. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan military has taken the lead role in de-mining Northern Province. It has coordinated resettlement and carried out civil administration until provisional civilian authorities could take over. Furthermore, the military has extended its support to returnees by assisting them in repairing their damaged houses or providing temporary accommodation

and supporting them in livelihood activities. Meanwhile, the military has monitored the activities of INGOs in newly liberated areas, in line with GoSL strategy.

In the field of rehabilitation and reintegration, the military has played a major role by apprehending ex-combatants who had merged with IDPs, assisting in rehabilitation and monitoring reintegration by helping unemployed ex-combatants to find work. Even while the military was heavily involved in reconstruction, it preserved its conventional capabilities. The contribution made by the military in post-conflict reconstruction has improved government responsiveness by facilitating government resettlement of almost all IDPs while reintegrating all rehabilitated ex-combatants, except those under legal prosecution.

Military involvements in reconstruction have varied outcomes. Due to the effectiveness of the Sri Lankan military in post-conflict reconstruction and development outside Northern Province, government institutions and society recognize the military as a potential provider of infrastructure development—but not as the lead institution for this endeavor. On the other hand, the presence of the military in the later stages of reconstruction has caused some friction with provisional civilian authorities, who resent the military's encroachment into an area that is traditionally a civilian realm, in particular the diplomatic and public-services sectors. Meantime, pro-LTTE fractions among the civilians have shown their displeasure at the large military role in reconstruction. Some in the international community complain that the extensive use of the military in post-conflict reconstruction in the Northern Province amounts to militarization, which threatens to undermine democracy there. In the meantime, the GoSL decision in December of 2011 to begin to withdraw the military from all community life and civil administration has gradually reduced the military presence in Northern Province.

A. ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

While the Sri Lankan military proved to be a very effective fighting force, it nevertheless was able to transition rapidly to post-conflict reconstruction for a variety of reasons, beginning with the fact that the military is trained to fight and win wars. Its organization contains specialist regiments that are trained to undertake the construction of bridges, roads, water and electrical supply systems, air fields, de-mining (including

dismantling IEDs), and the erection of temporary buildings and infrastructure to support the war effort. In this context, the Sri Lankan military has its own field engineer and engineer-services regiments, who are trained and equipped for the tasks described. Soon after the war, field engineer and engineer-service regiments had the manpower and resources to respond swiftly to post-conflict reconstruction without additional training.

The military has taken steps to form new engineer-service regiments to support post-conflict reconstruction. These regiments have strengthened the infrastructure-development capabilities of the military, helping GoSL expedite its response on post-conflict reconstruction. The GoSL response has been further enhanced by the dedication of two field-engineer regiments for de-mining and plant-engineering missions.

Although the military can undertake tasks related to its area of specialty, it is not capable of undertaking major construction and administration without previous experience. Since independence, the military has actively taken part in national development projects which have given it much needed training and experience and expanded its capabilities in post-conflict reconstruction. The participation of the military in such projects enhances its capabilities.

The previous employment of the military as civil administrators in conflict, post-conflict, and 2004 tsunami zones has enabled it to perform the same duties in formerly LTTE-held areas in support of reconstruction and resettlement. The same was true during the JVP insurrection of 1988–1990. Furthermore, the military administered border villages during the prolonged conflict, giving it sufficient previous experiences to carry out administration in newly liberated areas in support of resettlement and reconstruction.

B. RETAINING CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITIES

One remarkable feature of the Sri Lankan military's participation in post-conflict reconstruction is that this has been accomplished without sacrificing conventional capabilities. This is largely because there has been a division of labor within the military, where only field-engineer regiments and engineer-service regiments were tasked to play a major role in the reconstruction process. Even though field-engineer regiments have taken part actively, they have been kept in their fighting formations to preserve operational capabilities. Meantime, a majority of the infantry was used conventionally

during reconstruction to face challenges from isolated combatants and apprehend them. Participation of a few infantry units in the reconstruction process was required to support the returnees. However, those few infantry units reverted to their conventional roles on accomplishment of their tasks.

Furthermore, the military has taken steps to increase the professional military education of its members, now that the conflict is over, by increasing the number of participants in training courses locally and abroad while establishing new training institutions to elevate professional competence. The military has acted to preserve and reinforce its conventional capabilities by conducting two joint exercises during the period of reconstruction. Together with these measures, the military is trying to increase its participation in United Nation peacekeeping missions.

C. STRENGTHENING STATE CAPACITY

Some argue that military engagement in reconstruction activities ultimately undermines the state's capacity to provide basic services, since it makes the state more dependent on the military while eroding civilian capacities, especially in activities relating to development and infrastructure.

This has proven true for Sri Lanka, where reconstruction activities undertaken by the military after the conflict have expanded the military-led infrastructure development beyond the Northern Province war zone. The recognition the military achieved through those projects for its cost effectiveness and rapid execution has caused other government institutions to request military assistance for their infrastructure development. The army is carrying out feasibility studies to determine if it should establish a construction company to undertake civil infrastructure-development projects with the blessing of the GoSL. If this company is created, it will erode civilian capabilities, due to the highly organized and discipline structure of the military and its lower overhead costs. The government requirement to implement infrastructure-development projects with limited resources will create conditions in which the GoSL depends heavily on the military for activities relating to development and infrastructure.

D. OVERVIEW AND IMPLICATION ON CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS

Sri Lanka established its military under the guidance of the British after signing a defense pack in 1947, prior to independence.²²⁷ The British undertook the challenge of establishing a Sri Lankan army, navy and air force. Due to this reason, most of the officers in the initial stage were British trained, and interestingly the first commanders of the tri-services were British officers.²²⁸ In the meantime, the first Prime Minister instructed his secretary, before the establishment of the Sri Lankan military, that “[w]e should never give too much power to our armed forces, or become dependent on them.”²²⁹ Therefore, the Sri Lankan military is “deeply imbued with British ideas of the limited place of the military man in public life.”²³⁰

Bruneau and Tollefson argue that the basic measurement of the “quality of civil–military relations in a country” is the “existence of a ministry of defense (MOD).”²³¹ The Sri Lankan military has been under the control of civilians since its inception. The Sri Lankan ministry of defense and external affairs was established soon after independence in 1948. The structure of the Sri Lankan ministry of defense provides the opportunity for civilians to handle defense matters. It places the chief of defense staff, all tri-service commanders, and the inspector-general police under civilian additional secretaries in government protocol. Furthermore, the GoSL established the theoretically conceptualized NSC in 1999.

Even in mature democracies, disputes occur between civilian policymakers and soldiers over issues of defense policymaking. This phenomenon is most common in newly established democracies, whose decision-making mechanisms are developing and untested, and where relations between civilians and military leaders lack precedent and

²²⁷ Sri Lanka Army 50 Years On: 1949–1999, 14–16.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid., 21.

²³⁰ Ibid., 129.

²³¹ Bruneau, and Tollefson, *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil Military Relations* (Texas: University of Texas, 2006) 71.

tradition.²³² An example would be the attempted coup in Sri Lanka in 1962.²³³ Therefore, it is important for new democratic regimes to ensure that the military not play an interventionist role.

Huntington argues that professionalism is the main factor which helps to keep the soldier out of politics. He defines professionalism as composite of expertise, social responsibility and cooperate loyalty.²³⁴ He argues that these combinations will produce a politically neutral professional force (objective civilian control), which will comply with the legitimate civilian authority. Besides the attempted coup, Sri Lankan civil–military relations have been generally smooth. The Sri Lankan military has remained above the political fray, serving various governments, which came to power through democratic means. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan military proved its loyalty by suppressing the JVP insurrection in 1971, as well as the second JVP insurrection in 1988–90, and finally, by defeating the LTTE, which many believed could not be defeated militarily.²³⁵

Finer identifies possible situations with regard to military interventions, based on dispositions and opportunity.²³⁶ He argues that the disposition or desire to act is not sufficient for successful military intervention. It must be supported by the “opportunity.” Opportunity will arise from the “effect of domestic circumstances” and the “popularity of military.”²³⁷ Interestingly, after defeating the LTTE, the Sri Lankan military was so popular that it certainly had “opportunity,” had it chosen to use it. However, the military remained neutral, despite the fact that former commander of the army contested for the presidency soon after crushing the LTTE.

²³² Bruneau, and Tollefson, *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil Military Relations*, 101.

²³³ Donald L. Horowitz, *Coup Theories and Officers' Motives: Sri Lanka in Comparative Perspective* (Surry, United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 1980) 21.

²³⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and politics of Civil-Military Relations* (London: Harvard University press, 1957) 8–10.

²³⁵ Narayan Swamy, “The LTTE Cannot be Defeated Militarily, US Tells Sri Lanka,” RXPG News, February 25, 2007, http://www.rxpgnews.com/srilanka/The-LTTE-cannot-be-defeated-militarily-US-tells-Sri-Lanka-_16977.shtml (accessed March 6, 2012).

²³⁶ Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, 83.

²³⁷ Ibid., 74–81.

The engagement of the military in reconstruction provides an opportunity for the military to continue its service to the state. Finer argues that a professionalized force will intervene in politics, perceiving itself as the servant of the state rather than the government in power. Since the Sri Lankan military was involved in a prolonged conflict against the LTTE and thereafter in post-conflict reconstruction, there is a possibility that the Sri Lankan military will develop a will to political power. The instant a military draws this division between the nation and the democratically elected government, the possibility for intervention in politics arises.

The use of the military for reconstruction has led to civil–military friction among a pro-LTTE political faction and the military. In the initial stages of reconstruction and resettlement, the entire society and civil administration accepted the military as a legitimate post-conflict actor in rescuing civilians from the grip of the LTTE and assisting in resettlement. Furthermore, civil administration relied on the military’s ability to handle IDPs, reconstruction, and resettlement. Since civil administrations and civilians gained capacity, some mostly pro-LTTE fractions among the civilians have shown their displeasure about the military role in reconstruction. However, larger constituencies of Northern Province still want the military presence.²³⁸

Finer argues that the military may intervene in politics when its perspective differs with that of the civilian government with regard to size, organization, recruitment, and equipment of forces. Though there are no indications at present of military downsizing and reorganization in Sri Lanka, the GoSL curtailed military recruitment and equipment after the conflict. So far, there has been no budget deduction three years after the conclusion of the conflict. However, if the GoSL starts to downsize the military by reorganizing and implementing budget reductions, there is a possibility that the military may intervene in politics, counting on popular support to legitimize military action.

The employment of active-duty military in diplomatic and administrative appointments will have a negative impact on civil–military relations. Huntington argues that subjective civilian control exists in a variety of forms, maximizing the power of

²³⁸ Topix, “Tamil Wants Stronger Military Presence in Jaffna,” January 11, 2011, <http://www.topix.com/forum/world/sri-lanka/TCVQHQQVQ5L2HHLU6I> (accessed March 7, 2012).

civilians in military affairs. He argues that subjective civilian control will subordinate any officer coups to civilian interest and principles. The appointment of active-duty military officers to administrative positions and diplomatic missions abroad creates civil–military fusion. Huntington disagrees with the subjective civilian control, since it would undermine military professionalization, rendering it ineffective.²³⁹ Therefore, active-duty officer employment in administrative and diplomatic appointments should be curtailed to maintain professionalism in the military. Though the GoSL has decided to withdraw the military from all aspects of community life, including civil administration, as of December 2011, there are still quite a number of officers and enlisted men performing civil administration. However, Eleanor Pavey and Chris Smith put it thus: “civil–military relations in Sri Lanka have generally been robust—the 1962 coup attempt being the exception that proves the rule.”²⁴⁰

E. FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Centralized strategies incorporated by the GoSL—integrating government institutions, the international community, UN agencies, INGOs, and the military—have helped the extremely devastated and underdeveloped Northern Province to achieve a speedy recovery. Action taken to shape post-conflict reconstruction has enabled the military to win the hearts and minds of the Tamil people. Sacrifices made by the military in carrying out rescue and de-mining operations have demonstrated the soldiers’ willingness to risk their own lives to provide Tamils with better security. Reconstruction work carried out by the military strengthens the understanding between the military and civilians. Military commitments to finding livelihoods for returnees and reintegrating ex-combatants have gained access, trust, and approval from the Tamils who suffered most during the conflict. This has enhanced the economic strength of Northern Province.

Though the GoSL was committed to post-conflict reconstruction, LTTE international organizations continue to work hard to achieve a separate state in northern Sri Lanka. The GoSL commitment to curtailing LTTE international organizations has not

²³⁹ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* , 80–85.

²⁴⁰ Eleanor Pavey and Chris Smith, *Post Conflict Reconstruction and Security Sector Reforms in Sri Lanka*, 204.

been successful, for many reasons. The international community has not cooperated, but rather, has accused the GoSL of complicity in civilian casualties during the last stage of the conflict.²⁴¹ LTTE international organizations generate large sums of money through legitimate and illegal means to support their causes, funding reputed international organizations to discredit the GoSL commitment to post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation.²⁴² GoSL activities in Northern Province has significantly enhanced people's good opinion of the government and facilitated public relations. In this context, it is important to monitor how the GoSL counters the intention of LTTE international organizations by providing good governance.

There is a growing demand for effective reconciliation measures after the conflict. The international community, especially Western countries, question the absence of accountability for civilian casualties during the last stage of the conflict.²⁴³ The Sri Lankan military was accused of possible war crimes during this phase of the conflict.²⁴⁴ In the meantime, the United States announced that it will bring in a resolution against the GoSL in the March session of the UNHCR in Geneva.²⁴⁵ Others believe that the Sri

²⁴¹ Asian Tribune, "Vested Groups' Intention of Interfering in Sri Lanka's Internal Affairs Exposed," March 6, 2012, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2012/03/06/vested-groups-intention-interfering-sri-lanka%e2%80%99s-internal-affairs-exposed> (accessed March 6, 2012). See also, International Crisis Group, "Reconciliation in Sri Lanka: Harder Than Ever," Asia report n°209—July 18, 2011, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/files/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/209%20reconciliation%20in%20sri%20lanka%20-%20harder%20than%20ever.pdf> (accessed March 6, 2012).

²⁴² "LTTE Front Fund Amnesty International," *Sunday Observer*, March 4, 2012, <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2012/03/04/fea05.asp> (accessed March 6, 2012). See also, Ministry of Defence and Urban Development, "Sri Lanka is Still under Threat - Warns Secretary Defence," January 11, 2012, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20120111_01 (accessed January 15, 2012). See also, Global Peace Support Group, "Discard Amnesty International Report Against Sri Lanka," February 17, 2012, <http://www.globalpeacesupport.com/globalpeacesupport.com/post/2012/02/17/discard-amnesty-international-reports-against-sri-lanka.aspx> (accessed February 20, 2012).

²⁴³ United Nations, "Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka," March 31, 2011, http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf (accessed March 7, 2012).

²⁴⁴ BBC News South Asia, "Sri Lanka: UN Says Army Shelling Killed Civilians," April 26, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13190576> (accessed March 7, 2012).

²⁴⁵ Jehan Perera, "US will support Resolution on Sri Lanka at HRC Sessions in Geneva," *Lanka Standard*, February 14, 2012, <http://www.lankastandard.com/2012/02/us-will-support-resolution-on-sri-lanka-at-hrc-sessions-in-geneva/> (accessed on March 7, 2012). See also, Ceylontoday, "Clinton Invites GL to Washington," January 31, 2012, http://www.ceylontoday.lk/news-detail.php?news_id=2122&news_category_id=27 (accessed February 2, 2012).

Lankan reconstruction had led to an illiberal peace.²⁴⁶ Domestically, the GoSL has taken reconciliation measures, including the appointment of a parliamentary selection committee to address reconciliation.²⁴⁷ The military has also started an investigation of possible war crimes.²⁴⁸ In this context, it is interesting to study GoSL initiatives on reconciliation and how they address the allegations of the international community.

Sri Lanka's successful use of its military in post-conflict reconstruction has implications for other nations, both within South Asia and beyond. Many similar violent conflicts occurred during the last few decades. However, once those conflicts were over—either through a peace accord or outright battlefield victory—post-conflict reconstructions was not handled successfully in many cases. Many of those countries have returned to conflict. The GoSL has become a model by using its military to fill gaps in the government strategy in post-conflict reconstruction, most importantly by preserving the conventional capabilities of the military. Use of the military for post-conflict reconstruction has also helped the GoSL respond promptly and achieve success in rebuilding Northern Province.

While extensive use of the military for post-conflict reconstruction is not the norm, in Sri Lanka this approach has pioneered a new dimension in post-conflict reconstruction. In the Sri Lankan case, INGOs did not initially cooperate with the government, due to its decision to hold IDPs in welfare centers. Furthermore, a drain of government resources due to prolonged conflict and reconstruction in Eastern Province reduced the ability of the government to conduct post-conflict reconstruction in Northern Province. Under these circumstances, if the government had waited to commence post-conflict reconstruction until after restoring the capabilities of government civilian authorities and obtaining INGO assistance, reconstruction would have taken much longer and the return to normal would have been delayed. The INGOs contribution also mainly

²⁴⁶ Kristine Höglund and Camilla Orjuela, "Hybrid Peace Governance and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka." *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*: January-March 2012, Vol. 18, No. 1, 89–104.

²⁴⁷ Asian Tribune, "Allow Sri Lanka's Efforts at Reconciliation to Proceed Unimpeded—Minister Samarasinghe at UNHRC," February 28, 2012, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2012/02/27/allow-sri-lanka%e2%80%99s-efforts-reconciliation-proceed-unimpeded-%e2%80%93-minister-samarasinghe-u> (accessed March 7, 2012).

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

depends on their ability to obtain funds. In this context, the lack of infrastructure delays the return to normal conditions. This would have added more fuel to the root causes for the conflict, leading to uneven economic development in formerly LTTE-held areas because of scarce work and possibly to recurrence of the conflict. The GoSL decision to use the military for post-conflict reconstruction to compensate for lack of resources and capacity has assisted a speedy recovery in the extremely devastated Northern Province, strengthening the possibility that this time, the peace will hold, conflict will not recur, and the people of Sri Lanka will come together to live in peace.

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